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Pavane & L. Rodgers
D I A L O G U E S

CONCERNING

E L O Q U E N C E :

WITH A LETTER TO THE

F R E N C H A C A D E M Y ,

CONCERNING

R H E T O R I C ,

A N D

P O E T R Y .

✓ B Y

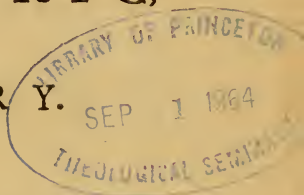
M. D E F E N E L O N

ARCHBISHOP OF CAMBRAY.

to which is added,

A DISCOURSE PRONOUNCED BY THE AUTHOR
AT HIS ADMISSION INTO THE ACADEMY;

with a new Translation of his Dialogues
BETWEEN DEMOSTHENES AND CICERO,
VIRGIL AND HORACE.



DICTIONARY

OF THE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

AND OF THE

SYNTAX OF THE

ENGLISH

GRAMMAR

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D I A L O G U E S

CONCERNING

E L O Q U E N C E

IN GENERAL;

AND PARTICULARLY THAT KIND

WHICH IS FIT FOR THE PULPIT:

BY THE

A R C H B I S H O P

O F

C A M B R A Y,

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH, AND ILLUSTRATED

WITH NOTES AND QUOTATIONS ;

By WILLIAM STEVENSON M. A

RECTOR OF MORNINGTHORP IN NORFOLK.

G L A S G O W:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY ROBERT AND ANDREW FOULIS

M D C C L.

THE HISTORY OF THE
CITY OF LONDON
FROM THE FIRST
SETTLING OF THE
TOWNE TO THE PRESENT
STATE OF THE SAME

By JOHN STOW, Citizen of London.
The first part of the
Description of the City of London
containing the Antiquities
and Remains of the same
as they were in the
Middle Ages. The second
part containing the
Description of the City of
London as it is at
this present time.
The third part containing
the Description of the
Suburbs of the City of
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T H E

T R A N S L A T O R ' s

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

THE French editor has given a full account of the following pieces. I think it needless to recommend them: they are the late Archbishop of CAMBRAY's. some apology however may be expected for my undertaking a translation that deserved the finest pen. all I can say, without the appearance of vanity, is, that I was afraid it should fall into worse hands. I have more reason to make some excuse for the unusual liberty I have taken in translating the Dialogues. 'tis what I could not avoid. their stile is extremely concise; sometimes obscure. and the Paris-edition, (the standard of the other,) is so faulty, not only in those places that are mark'd among the inaccurate errata, but throughout the Dialogues, that either they never had the author's finishing hand; or they

must have been published from a very defective copy. in order therefore to do him justice, I found it necessary to cloath his thoughts in an English dress, without confining myself always to a strict translation of the French. accordingly I have paraphrased several passages; transposed a few; and added whatever seemed proper to set his true sentiments in the fullest light. I would not have taken so much freedom with any piece that the author published in his life-time. the Letter to the French Academy, that was published some years before his death, is far more correct. in translating it I have kept as close to his stile as our language would permit. I have not indeed always expressed myself so succinctly as he: nor did I endeavour it. tho' I admire conciseness, I prefer perspicuity, when I cannot be both short and clear.

To illustrate and confirm our author's notions I have adorned this translation with many instructive, beautiful passages, collected from some

of the finest writers both antient, and modern; which are not in the French edition. I have likewise added some few passages of another kind. the quotations themselves, and the placing of the marks of reference, clearly point out the view with which each passage is quoted. if, for this purpose, I had every-where added introductory notes of my own, the reader would have had reason to complain of my distrusting his judgment.

Some critics will think I have too often neglected such connecting particles as for, but, seeing, &c. there is a peculiar beauty in this omission: and I should have left-out many more, if I had closely followed our author's example, or my own judgment. but too much must not be attempted at once.

Throughout the following sheets perhaps there are still too many marks of inaccuracy. I wish they may pass for instances of that affected negligence our author recommends. his

Letter plainly shews that he would not always avoid every little defect: nor ought it to be expected of his translator, if he could. an elaborate stile, and a scrupulous exactness, are inconsistent with the familiar strain of a dialogue. it were easy to prove that the free, and seemingly careless manner which might be blameable in other pieces, is really beautiful here; as being a just imitation of nature---but I will not lengthen this advertisement into a preface.

P R E F A C E

BY THE

CHEVALIER RAMSAY.

BOTH the antients and the moderns have treated of eloquence, with different views, and in different ways; as Logicians, as Grammarians, and as Critics: but we still wanted an author who should handle this delicate subject as a Philosopher, and a Christian: and this the late Archbishop of Cambray has done in the following Dialogues.

IN the antient writers we find many solid precepts of rhetoric, and very just rules laid down with great exactness: but they are oftentimes too numerous, too dry; and in fine, rather curious than useful. our author reduces the essential rules of this wonderful art, to these

three points ; proving, painting, and moving the passions.

TO qualify his orator for proving, or establishing any truth, he would have him a philosopher ; who knows how to enlighten the understanding, while he moves the passions ; and to act at once upon all the powers of the mind ; not only by placing the truth in so clear a light as to gain attention and assent ; but likewise by moving all the secret springs of the soul, to make it love that truth it is convinced of. in one word, our author would have his orator's mind filled with bright, useful truths, and the most noble exalted views.

THAT he may be able to paint, or describe well, he should have a poetic kind of enthusiasm ; and know how to employ beautiful figures, lively images, and bold touches, when the subject re-

quires them. but this art ought to be entirely concealed: or, if it must appear; it should seem to be a just copy of nature. wherefore our author rejects all such false ornaments as serve only to please the ear, with harmonious sounds; and the imagination, with ideas that are more gay and sparkling, than just and solid.

T O move the passions he would have an orator set every truth in its proper place; and so connect them that the first may make way for the second; and the next support the former: so that the discourse shall gradually advance in strength and clearness, till the hearers perceive the whole weight and force of the truth. and then he ought to display it in the liveliest images; and both in his words and gesture use all those af-

fecting movements that are proper to express the passions he would excite.

IT is by reading the antients that we must form our taste, and learn the art of eloquence in all its extent. but seeing that some of the antients themselves have their defects, we must read them with caution and judgment. our learned author distinguishes the genuine beauties of the purest antiquity, from the false ornaments used in after-ages; he points out what is excellent, and what is faulty, both in sacred and profane authors; and shews us that the eloquence of the Holy Scripture, in many places, surpasses that of the Greeks and Romans, in native simplicity, liveliness, grandeur, and in every thing that can recommend truth to our assent and admiration.

NOTHING can be more proper than

these Dialogues, to guard us against the vitiated taste of false wit; which serves only for amusement and ostentation. such eloquence as is founded on vanity and self-love, delights in gaudy ornaments; and neglects the genuine graces of a noble simplicity. for, the glittering fancy and quaint turns, and forced antitheses, the smooth periods, and other artificial ornaments of false oratory, make a little genius lose the relish of those superior and solid beauties that force their way to the mind, and at once enlighten, and captivate it.

THEY who value nothing but wit, will probably dislike the plainness of these Dialogues: but they would form another judgment of them if they considered that there are different styles of dialogue; of which antiquity furnishes us with two celebrated patterns; the dia-

logues of Plato ; and those of Lucian. Plato like a true philosopher, study'd chiefly to give force and light to his arguments ; and chose no other stile than what is used in conversation : so that his language is artless, easy and familiar. on the contrary Lucian is every-where witty and sparkling. all the persons he introduces have a sprightly delicate fancy ; so that in reading him, we forget the feign'd characters of gods and men who speak in his dialogues ; and cannot but see the ingenious author in every thing they say. we must own however that he is an original, who has succeeded wonderfully in this way of writing. he ridicul'd men in the most facetious pleasing manner : while Plato instructed them with gravity and wisdom. the Archbishop of Cambray has imitated them both, on different sub-

jects. in his dialogues of the dead (which he compos'd for the instruction of a young prince that was his pupil,) we find the various wit and agreeable humour of Lucian. and in the following sheets, where he lays down the rules of such a grave eloquence as is proper to move and persuade men; he imitates Plato: every thing is natural, and instructive: and instead of wit and humour we find truth, and wisdom shine throughout the composition.

IT was thought proper to subjoyn to these dialogues the author's letter to the French Academy concerning rhetoric, poetry, and other subjects; which has met with so good reception, that it cannot but be acceptable to every polite reader. the dialogues, tho' but lately published, were compos'd seve-

ral years ago in the Archbishop's younger days. but the letter was written in his more advanced age, in answer to one that the Academy sent him by their secretary ; desiring his advice on the several subjects he treats of : and therefore it is penned with the utmost elegance and politeness . however both in the dialogues, and the letter, we find the same just taste, the same noble genius ; the very same maxims ; and the same design in writing ; to reduce all composures to truth, nature, and decency.

D I A L O G U E S

C O N C E R N I N G

E L O Q U E N C E.

THE FIRST DIALOGUE, BETWEEN

A. AND B. AND C.

A. **W**ELL, Sir, I suppose you have been hearing the sermon to which you would have carried me. I have but very little curiosity that way, and am content with our parish-minister.

B. I was charmed with my preacher. you had a great loss, Sir, in not hearing him. I have hired a pew, that I may not miss one of his Lent sermons. O! he is a wonderful man. if you did but once hear him, you could never bear any other.

A. If it be so, I am resolved never to hear him. I would not have any one preacher give me a distaste of all others; on the contrary, I should chuse one that will give me such a relish and respect for the word of God, as may dispose me the more to hear it preached every where. but since I have lost so much by not hearing this fine discourse you are so pleased with, you may make up part of that loss, if you'll be so kind as to communicate to us what you remember of it.

B. I should only mangle the sermon, by endeavouring to repeat any part of it. there were an hundred beauties in it that one cannot recollect, and which none but the preacher himself could display——

A

A. Well; but let us at least know something of his design, his proofs, his doctrine, and the chief truths he enlarged on. do you remember nothing? was you unattentive?

B. Far from it: I never listened with more attention and pleasure.

C. What is the matter then? do you want to be intreated?

B. No: but the preacher's thoughts were so refined, and depended so much on the turn and delicacy of his expressions, that tho' they charmed me while I heard them, they cannot be easily recollected; and tho' one could remember them, if they be expressed in other words, they would not seem to be the same thoughts; but lose all their grace and force.

A. Surely, Sir, these beauties must be very fading, if they vanish thus upon the touch, and will not bear a review. I should be much better pleased with a discourse which has more body in it, and less spirit; that things might make a deeper impression on the mind, and be more easily remembred. what is the end of speaking, but to persuade people, and to instruct them in such truths as they can retain?

C. Now you have begun, Sir, I hope you will go on with this useful subject.

A. I wish I could prevail with you, Sir, to give us some general notion of the elegant harangue you heard.

B. Since you are so very urgent, I'll tell you what I can recollect of it. the text was this, † 'I have eaten ashes like bread.' now could any one make a happier choice of a text for Ash-wednesday! he

† PSAL. CII. 9.

shewed us that, according to this passage, ashes ought this day to be the food of our souls : then in his preamble he ingeniously interwove the story of Artemesia, with regard to her husband's ashes. his † transition to his Ave Maria was very artful; and his division was extremely ingenious : you shall judge of it. (1) ' tho' this dust (said he) be a sign of repentance, it is ' a principle of felicity : (11.) tho' it seems to humble ' us, it is really a source of glory : (111.) and tho' it ' represents death, it is a remedy that gives immortal ' life.' he turned this division various ways, and every time he gave it a new lustre by his antitheses. the rest of his discourse was not less bright and elegant ; the language was polite ; the thoughts new ; the periods were harmonious ; and each of them concluded with some surprizing turn. he gave such just characters of common life, that his hearers found their various pictures faithfully drawn : and his exact anatomy of all the passions equalled the maxims of the great ROCHEFOUCAULT. in short, I think it was a master-piece. but, Sir, I shall be glad to know your opinion of it.

A. I am unwilling to tell you my thoughts, or to

† *The Romish preachers, in the preamble of their sermons, address themselves to the Virgin Mary ; and are oftentimes very artful in their transition to it, as our author observes. we have a remarkable example of this in one of the greatest French orators, M. L'Esprit Flechier, bishop of Nismes, who seems to be oftner than once alluded to in these dialogues. in his panegyric on S. Joseph he introduces his Ave Maria thus,—Every things seems to concur to the*

glory of my subject; the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ, and Mary, are concerned in it; why may I not hope for the assistance of one of them, the grace of the other, and the intercessions of the virgin? to whom we will address ourselves in those words that the angel said to her, and which S. Joseph no doubt often repeated; Hail! Mary, &c. *Panegyriques, Vol. I. p. 71.*

lessen your esteem, of it. we ought to reverence the word of God ; to improve ourselves by all the truths that a preacher explains ; and avoid a critical humour, lest we should lessen the authority of the sacred function.

B. You have nothing to fear, Sir, at present. it is not out of curiosity that I ask your opinion ; but because I would have clear notions of it ; and such solid instructions as may not only satisfy myself, but be of use to others : for you know my profession obliges me to preach. give us your thoughts therefore, without any reserve ; and do not be afraid either of contradicting, or offending me.

A. Since you will have it so, I must obey your commands. to be free then ; I conclude, from your own account of this sermon, that it was a very sorry one.

B. Why so ?

A. Why ; can a sermon in which the scripture is falsely applyed ; a scrap of prophane history is told after a dry childish manner ; and a vain affectation of wit runs throughout the whole ; can such a sermon be good ?

B. By no means : but I do not think that the sermon I heard is of that sort.

A. Have patience, and I doubt not but you and I shall agree. when the preacher chose these words for his text, ‘ I have eaten ashes like bread,’ ought he to have amused his audience with observing some kind of relation between the mere sound of his text, and the ceremony of the day ? should he not first have explained the true sense of the words, before he applyed them to the present occasion ?

B. It had been better.

A. Ought he not therefore to have traced the subject a little higher, by entering into the true occasion and design of the Psalm ; and explaining the context ? was it not proper for him to inquire whether the interpretation he gave of the words was agreeable to the true meaning of them, before he delivered his own sense to the people, as if it were the word of God ?

B. He ought to have done so: but what fault was there in his interpretation ?

A. Why, I will tell you. David (who was the author of the cii. Psalm) speaks of his own misfortunes: he tells us, that his enemies insulted him cruelly, when they saw him in the dust, humbled at their feet, and reduced (as he poetically expresses it) to ‘eat ashes like bread;’ and ‘to mingle his drink with weeping.’ now what relation is there between the complaints of David, driven from his throne, and persecuted by his son Absalom ; and the humiliation of a christian, who puts ashes on his forehead, to remind him of his mortality, and disengage him from sinful pleasures ? could the preacher find no other text in scripture ? did Christ and his apostles, or the prophets, never speak of death, and the dust of the grave, to which all our pride and vanity must be reduced ? does not the scripture contain many affecting images of this important truth ? might he not have been content with the words of Genesis †, which are so natural and proper for this ceremony, and chosen by the church it self ? should a vain delicacy make him afraid of too often repeating a text that the holy spirit has dictated, and which the church appoints to be used every year ? why should he neglect such a pertinent passage, and many other

† GEN. III. 19.

places of scripture, to pitch on one that is not proper ? this must flow from a depraved taste, and a fond inclination to say something that is new.

B. You grow too warm, Sir : supposing the literal sense of the text not to be the true meaning of it, the preacher's remarks might however be very fine and solid.

C. As for my part, I do not care whether a preacher's thoughts be fine or not, till I am first satisfied of their being true. but, Sir, what say you to the rest of the sermon ?

A. It was exactly of a piece with the text. how could the preacher give such misplaced ornaments to a subject in itself so terrifying ; and amuse his hearers with an idle story of Artemesia's sorrow ; when he ought to have alarmed them, and given them the most terrible images of death ?

B. I perceive then you do not love turns of wit, on such occasions. but what would become of eloquence if it were stript of such ornaments ? would you confine every body to the plainness of country preachers ? such men are useful among the common people ; but persons of distinction have more delicate ears ; and we must adapt our discourses to their polite taste.

A. You are now leading me off from the point. I was endeavouring to convince you, that the plan of the sermon was ill laid ; and I was just going to touch upon the division of it : but I suppose you already perceive the reason why I dislike it ; for, the preacher lays down three quaint conceits for the subject of his whole discourse. when one chuses to divide a sermon, he should do it plainly, and give such a division as naturally arises from the subject itself, and gives a light

and just order to the several parts ; such a division as may be easily remembred, and at the same time help to connect and retain the whole ; in fine, a division that shews at once the extent of the subject, and of all its parts. but, on the contrary, here is a man who endeavours to dazzle his hearers, and puts them off with three points of wit, or puzzling riddles, which he turns and plies so dextrously, that they must fancy they saw some tricks of legerdemain. did this preacher use such a serious grave manner of address as might make you hope for something useful and important from him ? but, to return to the point you proposed ; did you not ask me whether I meant to banish eloquence from the pulpit ?

B. Yes. I fancy that is your drift.

A. Think you so ? pray what do you mean by eloquence ?

B. It is the art of speaking well.

A. Has this art no other end, besides that of speaking well ? have not men some design in speaking ? or do they talk only for the sake of talking ?

B. They speak to please, and to persuade others.

A. Pray let us carefully distinguish these two things. men talk in order to persuade ; that is certain : and too often they speak likewise to please others. but while one endeavours to please, he has another view ; which, tho' more distant, ought to be his chief aim. A man of probity has no other design in pleasing others, than that he may the more effectually inspire them with the love of justice, and other virtues ; by representing them as most amiable. he who seeks to advance his own interest, his reputation, or his fortune, strives to please, only that he may gain the affec-

tion and esteem of such as can gratify his ambition, or his avarice: so that this very design of pleasing is still but a different manner of perswasion that the orator aims at; for he pleases others to inveigle their affection; that he may thereby persuade them to what advances his interest.

B. You cannot but own then that men often speak to please. the most ancient orators had this view. Cicero's orations plainly shew that he laboured hard for reputation: and who will not believe the same of Isocrates, and Demosthenes too? all the Panegyrist's were more sollicitous for their own honour, than for the fame of their heroes; and they extolled a prince's glory to the skies, chiefly because they hoped to be admired for their ingenious manner of praising him. this ambition seems to have been always reckoned commendable both among the Greeks and the Romans: and such emulation brought eloquence to its perfection: it inspired men with noble thoughts and generous sentiments, by which the ancient republics were made to flourish. the advantageous light in which eloquence appeared in great assemblies, and the ascendant it gave the orator over the people, made it to be admired, and helpt to spread polite learning. I cannot see indeed why such an emulation should be blamed even among christian orators; provided they did not shew an indecent affectation in their discourses, nor in the least enervate the precepts of the gospel. we ought not to censure what animates young people, and forms our greatest preachers.

A. You have here put several things together, which, if you please, Sir, we will consider separately; and observe some method in enquiring what we ought to

conclude from them. but let us above all things avoid a wrangling humour; and examine the subject with calmness and temper, like persons who are afraid of nothing so much as of error, and let us place the true point of honour in a candid acknowledgment of our mistakes, whenever we perceive them.

B. That is the exact state of my mind; or at least I judge it to be so; and I intreat you to tell me when you find me transgressing this equitable rule.

A. We will not as yet talk of what relates to preachers; for that point may be more seasonably considered afterwards. let us begin with those orators whose examples you vouched. by mentioning Demosthenes and Isocrates together, you disparage the former; for the latter was a lifeless declaimer, that busied himself in polishing his thoughts, and giving an harmonious cadence to his periods. he had a very * low and vulgar notion of eloquence; and placed almost the whole of it, in a nice disposal of his words. A man who employed ten or (as others say) fifteen years, in smoothing the periods of a panegyric, which was a discourse concerning the necessities of Greece, could give but a very small and slow relief to the republic, against the enterprizes of the Persian king. Demosthenes spoke against Philip in a quite different manner.

* *In the introduction of this very panegyric that our author mentions, Isocrates says, Such is the nature of eloquence; that it makes great things appear little; and small things to seem great; it can represent old things as new; and new things as if they were old; and that therefore he would* not decline a subject that others had handled before him, but would endeavour to declaim better than they.—*Upon which Longinus (§. 38.) makes this judicious remark; that by giving such a character of eloquence, in the beginning of his panegyric, the orator in effect cautioned his hearers not to believe his discourse.*

you may read the comparifon that Dionyfius Halicarnaffius has made of thefe two orators, and fee there the chief faults he obferved in Ifocrates; whofe difcourfes are vainly gay and florid; and his periods adjusted with incredible pains, merely to pleafe the ear: while on the contrary, * Demofthenes moves, warms, and captivates the heart. he was too fenfibly touched with the intereft of his country, to mind the little glittering fancies that amused Ifocrates. every oration of Demofthenes is a clofe chain of reasoning, that represents the generous notions of a foul who difdains any thought that is not great. his difcourfes gradually increafe in force by greater light and new reasons; which are always illuftrated by bold figures and lively images. one cannot but fee that he has the good of the republic entirely at heart; and that nature itfelf fpeaks in all his tranfports: for his artful addrefs is fo mafterly, that it never appears. nothing ever equalled the force and vehemence of his difcourfes. have you never read the remarks that Longinus made on them, in his treatife of the Sublime?

B. No: is not that the treatife that Mr. Boileau tranflated? do you think it fine?

A. I am not afraid to tell you that I think it furpaffes Aristotle's rhetoric; which, though it be a very folid tract, is yet clogged with many dry precepts, that

* In oratoribus verò, Graecis quidem, admirabile eft quantum inter omnes unus excellat. attamen cum efferet Demofthenes, multi oratores magni, et clari fuerunt, et antea fuerant, nec pofttea defece-
runt. Cic. *Orat.* §. 2.

Quid denique Demofthenes?

non cunctos illos tenues & circumfpectos [oratores] vi, ſublimitate, impetu, cultu, compoſitione ſuperavit? non inſurgit locis? non figuris gaudet? non tranſlationibus nitet? non oratione ſicta dat carentibus vocem? — Quintil. *lib. xii. cap.*

10.

are rather curious, than fit for practice ; so that it is more proper to point out the rules of art to such as are already eloquent, than to give us a just taste of rhetoric, and to form true orators. but Longinus, in his discourse of the Sublime, intersperses among his precepts, many fine examples from the greatest authors, to illustrate them. * he treats of the Sublime in a lofty manner, as his translator has judiciously observed : he warms our fancy, and exalts our mind ; he forms our taste ; and teaches us to distinguish what is either fine, or faulty, in the most famous ancient writers.

B. Is Longinus such a wonderful author ? did he not live in the days of Zenobia, and the emperor Aurelian ?

A. Yes ; you cannot but know their history.

B. Did not those days fall vastly short of the politeness of former ages ? and can you imagine that an author who flourished in the declension of learning and eloquence had a better taste than Isocrates ? I cannot believe it.

A. I was surprized myself, to find it so : but you need only read him, to be convinced of it. tho' he lived in a very corrupted age, he formed his judgment upon the ancient models ; and has avoided almost all the reigning faults of his own time ; I say almost all, for, I must own, he studyed rather what is admirable, than what is useful ; and did not consider eloquence

* *Thee, bold Longinus ! all the nine inspire,
And bless their critic with a poet's fire :
An ardent judge, who, zealous in his trust,
With warmth gives sentence, yet is always just :
Whose own example strengthens all his laws,
And is himself that great Sublime he draws.*

Mr. Pope's essay on criticism, p. 45.

as subservient to morality; nor apply it to direct the conduct of life. and in this he does not seem to have had such solid views as the antient Greeks, and especially some of their philosophers. but we ought to forgive him a failing, for which Isocrates was far more remarkable, tho' he lived in a more refined age. and this defect ought the rather to be over-looked in a particular discourse, where Longinus does not treat of what is proper to instruct men, but of what is apt to move and seize their passions. I chuse to recommend this author, Sir, because he will help to explain my meaning to you. you will see what a glorious * character he gives of Demosthenes, from whom he quotes several passages that are most sublime: he will likewise shew you those faults of Isocrates that I mentioned. if you be unwilling to take the trouble of becoming acquainted with these authors, by reading their works; you may get a very just notion of them by consulting Longinus. let us now leave Isocrates; and talk of Demosthenes, and Cicero.

B. You are for leaving Isocrates, because he is not for your purpose.

* — ὁ δὲ ἔνθεν λαβὼν τὸν τῷ τὸν ἔσπασε. διὰ τῷτο οἷς ἔχει
μεγαλοφυσάτω ἔπ' ἄκρον ἀ- καλοῖς ἅπαντας ἀένικᾶ, ἔνπερ
ρετᾶς συντετελεσμένους ὑψηλοῦ ὦν ἔκ ἔχει, ὥσπερ ἀ καταβρον-
ρίας τόνον, ἔμφυχα πάθη, περι- τᾶ ἔ καταρέγει τὸς ἀπ' αἰῶνος
υσίαν, ἀγχίνουαν, τάχος, ἔνθεν ῥήτορας ἔ θάττον ἄν τις κεραυ-
δ', ὃ κύριον, τὴν ἅπασιν ἀπρόσι- νοῖς φερομένοις ἀντανόξαι τὰ
τον δεινότητα ἔ δύναμιν ἔπει- ὅμματα δύναιτο, ἢ ἀντορθαλ-
δὴ ταῦτα, φημί, ὡς θεόπεμπτά μῆσαι τοῖς ἐπαλλήλοις ἐκένου
τινα δωρήματα (ὃ γὰρ εἰπεῖν θε- πάθεισιν. Longinus, § 34.
μιτὸν ἀνθρώπινον) ἀθρόα ἐς ἑαυ-

A. Let us go on then with Isocrates, since you are not yet convinced : and let us judge of his rhetoric by the rules of eloquence itself ; and by the sentiments of Plato, the most *eloquent writer among the antients. will you be determined by him ?

B. I will be determined by him, if he be in the right : but I never resign my judgment implicitly to any author.

A. Remember this rule : it is all that I ask of you. and if you do not let some fashionable prejudices bias your judgment, reason will soon convince you of the truth. I would therefore have you believe neither Isocrates, nor Plato : but judge of them both, by clear principles. now I suppose you will grant that the chief end of eloquence is to persuade men to embrace truth and virtue.

B. I am not of your mind : this is what I have already deny'd.

A. I will endeavour to prove it then. eloquence, if I mistake not, may be considered in three respects : as the art of enforcing truth on people's minds, and of making them better : as an art indifferent in itself ; which wicked men may use as well as good ; and which

* Sed ego neque illis assentiebar, neque harum disputationum inventori, & principi longe omnium in dicendo gravissimo, et *Eloquentissimo Platoni*, cujus tum Athenis cum Carneade diligentius legi Gorgiam quo in libro, hoc maxime admirabar Platonem, quod mihi in oratoribus irridendis, ipse esse *Orator Summus* videbatur. Cic. de Orat. lib. I. §. 11.

Quid denique Demosthenes? — non illud jusjurandum per caesos in Marathone ac Salamine propugnatores reipublicae, satis manifesto docet praeceptorem ejus Platonem fuisse? quem ipsum num Asianum appellabimus plerunque instinctis divino spiritu vaticinis comparandum? *Quint. lib. xii. cap. 10. see Longinus §. xiii.*

may be applied to recommend injustice and error, as well as probity, and truth : and, as an art which selfish men may use to ingratiate themselves with others ; to raise their reputation, and make their fortune. which of these ends do you admit of ?

B. I allow of them all. what do you infer from this concession ?

A. The inference will afterwards appear. have patience a little ; and be satisfied, if I say nothing but what is evidently true, till by gradual advances I lead you to the right conclusion. of the three ends of eloquence, I now mentioned, you will undoubtedly prefer the first.

B. Yes : it is the best.

A. What think you of the second ?

B. I see what you drive at : you are going into a fallacy. the second sort is faulty, because of the ill use the orator makes of his eloquence, to enforce error and vice. but still the rhetoric of a wicked man may be good in itself, tho' the use he makes of it be pernicious. now we are talking of the nature and rules of eloquence ; not of the uses it should be applied to. let us keep to the true state of the question.

A. If you will do me the favour to hear me a little, you will find that I have the point in dispute always in view. you seem then to condemn the second sort of eloquence : or, to speak without ambiguity, you condemn the † abuse of rhetoric.

† *When I consider the means of happy living (says an eloquent writer) and the causes of their corruption, I can hardly forbear recanting what I said before; and concluding, that eloquence ought to be banished out of all civil societies, as a thing fatal to peace and good manners. to this opinion I should wholly incline, if I did not find, that it is a weapon which may be as easily procured by bad*

B. Right. you now speak correctly. so far then we are agreed.

A. What say you of the third end of eloquence ; I mean the orator's endeavouring to please others, by talking ; that he may raise his reputation, or his fortune ?

B. You know my opinion already. I reckon such an use of eloquence very fair and allowable ; seeing it excites a laudable emulation, and helps to improve men's talents.

A. What kind of talents would you have chiefly improved ? suppose you had some new state, or commonwealth, to model, in what kinds of knowledge would you have the subjects trained up, and instructed ?

B. In every kind that could make them better. I would endeavour to make them good subjects, peaceable, obedient, and zealous for the public welfare. I would have them fit to defend their country in case of war ; and in peace to observe and support the laws ; to govern their families ; cultivate their lands ; train up their children to the practice of virtue, and inspire them with a strong and just sense of religion : I would have them carry on such a trade as the state and necessities of the country might require : and apply themselves to such arts and sciences as are useful in common life. these I think, ought to be the chief aims of a law-giver.

A. Your views are very just and solid. you would

*men, as by good : and that if upon all occasions exposed to the
these only should cast it away, armed malice of the wicked.
and those retain it ; the naked Bishop Sprat's hist. of the
innocence of virtue would be royal society, p. III.*

then have subjects averse to laziness ; and employed about such useful things as should tend someway or other to advance the public good.

B. Certainly.

A. And would you exclude all useless professions ?

B. Yes.

A. You would allow only of such bodily exercises as conduced to people's health, and strength ? I do not mention the beauty of the body ; for that is a natural consequence of health and vigour, in bodies that are duly formed.

B. I would suffer no other exercises.

A. Would you not therefore banish all those that serve only to amuse people, and cannot render them fitter to bear either the constant labours and employments of peace, or the fatigues of war ?

B. Yes ; I should follow that rule.

A. I suppose you would do it for the same reason that you would likewise condemn (as you already granted,) all these exercises of the mind which do not conduce to render it more strong, sound, and beautiful ; by making it more virtuous.

B. It is so. what do you infer from that ? I do not yet see your drift : your windings are very long.

A. Why ; I would argue from the plainest principles ; and not advance the least step, without carrying light and certainty along with us. answer me then, if you please.

B. Seeing we lay down the rule you last mentioned, for the management of the body, there is certainly greater reason to follow it in the conduct and improvement of the mind.

A. Would you permit such arts as are only subser-

vient to pleasure, amusement, and vain curiosity; and have no relation either to the duties of domestic life, or the common offices of society ?

B. I would banish all such from my commonwealth.

A. If you allowed of mathematicians then, it would be for the sake of mechanics, navigation, surveying of land, the fortification of places ; and such calculations as are useful in practice ; &c. so that it is the usefulness of the mathematics that would recommend them to your patronage. and if you tolerated physicians and lawyers, it would be for the preservation of health ; and the support of justice.

B. Right.

A. And with the same view of usefulness you would admit all other serviceable professions.

B. Certainly.

A. But how would you treat the musicians ?

B. I would encourage them.

A. Would you not lay them under some proper restraint, according to the judgment and practice of the antient Greeks, who always joined pleasure and usefulness together ?

B. Explain yourself a little.

A. Tho' they joined music and poetry together, and carryed both these arts to the greatest perfection ; they applyed them to inspire people's minds with fortitude, and noble thoughts. they used poetry and music to prepare them for battle ; and carryed musicians and their various instruments, to war. hence came drums and trumpets, which raised in them a spirit of enthusiasm, and a sort of fury that they called divine. it was by music and the charms of verse, that they softened savage nations : and by the same harmony, they sweet-

ly instilled wisdom into their children. they made them sing Homer's verses to inspire their minds with the love of glory, liberty, and their native country; and with a contempt of death, and riches, and effeminate pleasure. they gave their very dances a grave and serious turn: for it is certain they danced not merely for the sake of pleasure. we see, by David's example, ‡ that the eastern people reckoned dancing a serious kind of employment, like music, and poetry. the mysterious dances of the priests were adapted by the heathens among their ceremonies, on solemn festivals, in honour of their gods. there were a thousand instructions couched under their poems, and their fables: nay their most grave and austere philosophy always appeared with an air of gayety, and good humour. all those arts that consisted either in melodious sounds, regular motions of the body, or the use of words; music, dancing, eloquence, and poetry, were invented to express the passions; and by that means to communicate these passions to others. thus did they endeavour to convey noble sentiments to people's minds, and give them lively affecting views of the beauty of virtue, and the deformity of vice. so that all these arts, under the shew of pleasure, favoured the most serious designs of the ancients; and were used to promote morality and religion. even the diversion of hunting was encouraged to train up the youth for war. their strongest pleasures contained always some solid instruction. from which source flowed those many heroic virtues in Greece, which all ages have since admired. it is true this first kind of instruction was afterwards changed; and of itself was accompanied with remarkable defects.

‡ 2 Sam. vi. 5, 14.

the chief fault of it was, its being founded on a false and pernicious scheme of religion: in which the Greeks, and all the ancient sages of the heathen world were strangely deceived; being plunged into gross idolatry. but notwithstanding this fundamental mistake, they chose a very proper way of inspiring men with religion and virtue: their method was wise, agreeable, and apt to make a lively, lasting impression.

C. You said that this first institution was afterwards changed: pray, how did it happen?

A. Tho' virtue gives men the true politeness; if great care be not taken, politeness gradually degenerates into an unmanly softness. the Asiatic Greeks fell first into this corruption. the Ionians grew effeminate; and all that coast of Asia was a theatre of luxury. the Cretans too became corrupted, notwithstanding the wise laws of Minos. you know the † verse that St. Paul quotes from one of their own poets. Corinth was remarkable for its excessive riot, and dissoluteness. the Romans, as yet unpolished, began to fall into such practices as quite relaxed their rustic virtue. Athens was not free from the general contagion, with which Greece was all-over infected. pleasure which was used at first as the means to convey wisdom into people's minds, usurped the place of wisdom itself: and in vain did the philosophers remonstrate against this disorder. Socrates arose, and shewed his deluded fellow-citizens that the pleasure about which they were entirely employed, ought only to be used as the vehicle of wisdom, and an incentive to virtue. Plato, his disciple, (who was not ashamed to compose his di-

† Κρήτης αἰ ψεύσαι, κακὰ θηρία, γαστέρες ἄρσαι.

alogues on the plan and subject of his master's discourses,) banished from his republic all such musical notes, scenes of tragedy, and poetical compositions, (even such parts of Homer himself,) as did not incline people to love order, and wise laws. this, Sir, was the judgment of Socrates and Plato concerning poets and musicians: do you approve of it?

B. I am entirely of their mind; and would allow of nothing that is useless. since we may find pleasure enough in solid and valuable things, we ought not to seek for it elsewhere. in order to recommend virtue to men's esteem and practice, we must show them that it is consistent with pleasure: and on the contrary, if we separate pleasure from virtue, people will be strongly tempted to forsake a virtuous course. besides, that which gives pleasure only, without instruction, can at best but amuse and soften the mind. do not you see, Sir, how much a philosopher I am become, by hearing you? but let us go on to the end: for we are not yet perfectly agreed.

A. I hope we shall be very quickly. and since you are grown so much a philosopher, give me leave to ask you one question more. we have obliged musicians, and poets, to employ their art only for promoting virtue: and the subjects of your new republic are debarred from all such spectacles as can only please, and not instruct them. but what would you do with conjurers?

B. They are impostors that ought to be banished from all societies.

A. They do no harm. you cannot think they are forcerers: so that you have no reason to be afraid of their practising any diabolical art.

B. No, I do not fear that: nor should I give the least credit to any of their senseless stories. but they do harm enough by amusing the common people. I will not suffer such idle persons in my commonwealth, as divert others from their business, and have no other employment but to amuse people with foolish talk.

A. But perhaps they get a livelihood that way; and lay up wealth for themselves, and their families:

B. No matter: they must find out some honest way of living. it is not enough that they seek a livelihood; they must gain it by some employment that is useful to the public. I say the same of all those strolling vagabonds who amuse crowds with silly prattle and foolish songs. for tho' they should never lie, nor say any thing that is immodest; their being useless to the public is guilt enough. so that they ought either to be excluded from the society, or compelled to follow some useful occupation.

A. Would you not at least tolerate tragedians, provided they represent no scenes of immodesty, or extravagant love? I do not ask you this question as a Christian: answer only as a law-giver, and a philosopher.

B. If tragedies did not conduce to instruction as well as to pleasure, I should condemn them.

A. Right. in that you are exactly of Plato's opinion: for he would not allow of any poems or tragedies in his republic, that should not first be examined by the guardians of the laws: that so the people might neither hear nor see any thing but what should tend to strengthen the laws and promote virtue. in this you likewise fall in with the sentiments of other antient authors, who judged that tragedy ought to turn chief-

ly upon two passions; either the terror that arises from a view of the fatal effects of vice; or that compassion which accompanies the representation of an oppressed and steady virtue. Sophocles and Euripides wrote with these views, and always endeavoured to excite either pity, or terror.

B. I remember I have met with this last rule in Mr. Boileau's art of poetry.

A. You are right, he's a man that knows perfectly well not only the foundation of poetry; but likewise the solid aim to which philosophy (superiour to all arts) ought to direct the poet.

B. But whither are you leading me all this while?

A. I lead you no farther: you guide yourself now; and are happily come to the conclusion I first propos'd. have you not said, that in your republic, you would not suffer idle people who amuse others, and have no other business but merely to talk? is it not upon this principle that you would exclude all such tragedies as do not convey instruction as well as pleasure? now will you suffer that to be done in prose, that you will not tolerate in verse? after such a just rigour against useless poetry, how can you shew any favour to those * declaimers who talk only to shew their parts?

* *Who can behold, without indignation, how many mists and uncertainties these specious tropes and figures have brought on our knowledge? how many rewards that are due to more profitable and difficult arts, have been still snatched away by the easy vanity of fine speaking: for now I am warmed with this just anger,*

I cannot withhold myself from betraying the shallowness of all those seeming mysteries, upon which we writers, and speakers look so big. and in few words, I dare say, that of all the studies of men, nothing may be sooner obtained, than this vicious abundance of phrase, this trick of metaphors, this volubility of tongue, which

B. But these orators we were speaking of, have two designs that are commendable.

A. What are they?

B. The first is to maintain themselves: for, by their profession they procure a subsistence. their rhetoric gets them repute; and this brings along with it that wealth they stand in need of.

A. You yourself have already answered this pretence, for, did you not say that it is not enough that one gains a livelihood, unless he get it by some employment that is useful to the public? he who should represent tragedies that give no instruction, might get his bread by them: but this would not hinder you from driving him out of your commonwealth. you would say to him, 'go chuse some regular useful employment; and do not divert your neighbours from their business. if you would have a lawful gain from them; apply yourself to do them some real service; or to make them more wise and virtuous.' now why should you not say the same to the rhetoricians?

B. But I have a second reason to offer for tolerating them.

A. Pray, let us hear it.

B. Why; the orator serves the public.

A. In what?

B. He improves people's minds, and teaches them eloquence.

makes so great noise in the world. and labour so long after it, in the but I spend words in vain; for years of our education; that we the evil is now so inveterate, cannot but ever after think kinder that it is hard to know whom to of it than it deserves. Bishop Sprat's hist. of the royal society, p. 112.

A. Suppose I should invent some fantastical art, or imaginary language, that could not be of any use; could I serve the public by teaching such a senseless language, or silly art?

B. No: because one cannot serve others as a master, unless he could teach them something that is useful.

A. You cannot prove then that an orator serves the public, by his teaching eloquence, unless you could first shew that it is an useful art. of what use are a man's fine thoughts if they do not advance the public good? I am very sensible that they are advantageous to himself; for they dazzle his hearers; who have so bad a taste that they will applaud his skill, and even reward him for his useless talk. but ought you to suffer such a mercenary fruitless eloquence in the government you have to model? a shoemaker is serviceable in his way, and maintains his family with what he gains by supplying other people's necessities. so that you see the most ordinary employments tend to some useful purpose: and there is no other art but the rhetorician's that serves only to amuse people with talking. in fine, such eloquence can only, on the one hand, satisfy the vain curiosity of the hearers, and encourage their idleness; and on the other, gratify the declaimer's pride, and ambition. but for the honour of your republic, Sir, do not tolerate such an abuse.

B. I must grant that an orator's aim should be to make people more wise and virtuous.

A. Do not forget this: you shall see the consequences of it by and by.

B. Notwithstanding this concession, he who is employ'd in instructing others, may at the same time en-

deavour to acquire reputation and wealth, for himself.

A. I told you before, that we are not now handling the point as christians: I need only use philosophy against you. let me put you in mind that you grant an orator is obliged to instruct others with a design to improve them in virtue. thus we get rid of all useless declaimers. we ought not even to suffer panegyrist any farther than they render true wisdom and probity more amiable by their praises; and propose models of * virtue and valour that are worthy of imitation.

B. What then, is a panegyric good for nothing, unless it be full of morality?

A. Have you not granted this already? instruction is the proper end of speech: and the only good reason for praising any hero, is, that we may represent his worth to others, in order to excite their emulation; and to shew them that virtue and true glory are inseparable. therefore a panegyric should be kept free from all general, excessive, flattering praises; and such barren thoughts as do not afford the least instruction. every thing should tend to make the hearers in love with what is truly great and good. but we find that most panegyrist seem to magnify particular virtues, only that they may the more effectually praise those that practised them, and set off their heroes to greater advantage. when they have any one to praise, they exalt his peculiar virtues far above all others. but

* Perspicuum est igitur alia esse in homine optanda, alia laudanda. genus, forma, vires, opes, divitiae, ceteraque quae fortuna det, aut extrinsecus, aut corpori, non habent in se veram laudem, quae de-

beri VIRTUTI uni putatur.—
virtus autem quae est per se ipsa laudabilis, et sine qua nihil laudari potest, tamen habet plures partes, quarum alia est ad laudationem aptior.
CIC. *de Orat.* lib. ii.

every thing has its turn; and on another occasion, those very qualities which they preferred before, must now give place to some other virtues, that come in course to be extolled to the highest pitch. in this respect, I think Pliny is to be blamed. if he had praised Trajan, as a fit model for other heroes to copy after, this would have been a design worthy of an orator. but the praise of that prince, (however deserving he was) ought not to have been Pliny's chief aim. Trajan should only have been proposed to mankind as an imitable example, to allure them to virtue. when a panegyrist has such a mean view, as to praise the person, rather than the virtues that render him conspicuous, this is only flattery addrest to pride.

B. What think you then of those poems that were made in praise of antient heroes? Homer has his Achilles; and Virgil, his Aeneas. will you condemn these two poets?

A. By no means, Sir: do but examine the design of their works. in the Iliad, Achilles is the chief hero; but his praise is not the main end of the poem. his character is faithfully drawn with all its * defects: nay these very defects are a part of that instruction which the poet designed to convey to posterity. the † great design of this work was to inspire the Greeks with the

* Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer:
Jura negat sibi nata: nihil non arrogat armis.

HOR. *de A. P.*

† Trojani belli scriptorem, maxime Lollī,
Dum tu declamas *Romae*, *Praeneste* relegi:
Qui, quid sit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non,
Plenius ac melius *Chrysippo* et *Crantore* dicit.
Fabula qua Paridis propter narratur amorem,
Stultorum regum et populorum continet aestus.

HOR. *Epist. lib. i. Ep. 2.*

love of warlike glory; and a dread of discord, as the greatest obstacle to success. this moral instruction is plainly interwoven throughout the poem. the Odyſſee indeed represents, in ‡ Ulyſſes, a hero more regular, and more accomplished: but this is still natural for, of course, a man like Ulyſſes, whose chief character is wisdom, must be more wary, and uniform in his conduct, than such a rough, warm, forward youth as Achilles. so that in drawing both these heroes, Homer seems only to have copyed nature. in fine, throughout the Odyſſee we find innumerable instructions for the whole conduct of life: and one cannot but observe that the poet's design, in describing a prudent man, whose wisdom makes him always successful, was, to shew posterity what good effects might be expected from prudent piety, and a regular life. Virgil, in his Aeneid, has imitated the Odyſſee in his * hero's character; and has drawn him brave, moderate, pious, and steddý. but it is evident that the praise of Aeneas was not the poet's principal aim. that hero was designed to represent the † Roman people, who descended from him: and Virgil meant to shew them that their extraction was divine; that the gods had destined them to govern the world: and by this he animated them to the practice of such heroic virtues as might sup-

‡ Rursus quid virtus, et quid sapientia possit,

Utile proposuit nobis exemplar *Ulyſſem*.

HOR. *Epist.* lib. i. *Ep.* 2.

* Rex erat Aeneas nobis, quo justior alter
Nec pietate fuit, nec bello major et armis.

† Nunc age, Dardaniam prolem quae deinde sequatur
Gloria, qui maneat Itala de gente Nepotes,
Illustres animas, nostrumque in nomen ituras,
Expediam dictis, et te sua fata docebo.

port the glory designed for them. now a heathen could not possibly devise a nobler moral than this. the only fault of which Virgil can be suspected, is his having had his private interest too much in view; and his turning his excellent poem to the * praise of Augustus, and his family, with too great an air of flattery. but we ought not to criticize any author too severely.

B. But will you not allow a poet, or an orator to seek his fortune in an honourable way?

A. After this useful digression concerning panegyrics, we now return to the difficulty you proposed. the question is, whether an orator ought to be intirely disinterested?

B. I do not think that he ought: for this would overturn the most common maxims.

A. In your republic, would you not have orators obliged to the strictest rules of truth? do not you own that they ought never to speak in public; but in order to instruct people; to reform their conduct; and strengthen the laws?

B. Yes.

- Huc. geminas huc flecte acies; hanc aspice gentem
Romanosque tuos. Hic Caesar, et omnis Iuli
 Progenies magnum coeli ventura sub axem.
 Hic vir, hic est tibi quem promitti saepius audis
Augustus Caesar, Divi genus: aurea condet
 Saecula qui rursus Latio, regnata per arva
 Saturno quondam: — —
 Excudent alii spirantia mollius aera.
 Credo equidem, vivos ducent de marmore vultus;
 Orabunt causas melius: coelique meatus
 Describent radio; et surgentia sidera dicent:
 Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento:
 Hae tibi erunt artes; pacisque imponere morem;
 Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos.

ÆNEID. lib. vi.

A. An orator then should have nothing either to hope, or fear, from his hearers, with regard to his own interest. if you allowed of * ambitious mercenary declaimers, do you think they would oppose all the foolish unruly passions of men? if they themselves be subject to avarice, ambition, luxury, and such shameful disorders; will they be able to cure others? if they seek after wealth; can they be fit to disengage others from that mean pursuit? I grant that a virtuous and disinterested orator ought always to be supplied with the conveniencies of life: nor can he ever want them, if he be a true philosopher; I mean, such a wise and worthy person as is fit to reform the manners of men: for then he will live after a plain, modest, frugal, laborious manner: he will have occasion but for little: and that little he will never want; tho' he should earn it with his own hands. now, what is superfluous ought not to be offered him as the recompence of his public services: and indeed it is not worthy of his acceptance. he may have honour and authority conferred on him: but if he be master of his passions (as we suppose) and above selfish views, he will use this authority only for the public good; and be ready to resign it, when he can no longer enjoy it without flattery, or dissimulation. in short, an orator cannot be fit to persuade people, unless he be inflexibly upright: for, without

* Jam hoc quis non videt, | dii, doctrinae, pessimo, atque
 maximam partem orationis in | optimo viro, uter melior dice-
 tractatu aequi bonique consis- | tur orator? nimirum qui ho-
 tere? dicetne de his secundum | mo quoque melior. non igitur
 debitam rerum dignitatem ma- | unquam malus idem homo, et
 lus atque iniquus? denique— | perfectus orator. QUINT. lib.
 demus id quod nullo modo fi- | xii. c. i.
 eri potest, idem ingenii, stu-

this steady virtue, his talents and address would, like a mortal poison, infect and destroy the body-politic. for this reason, * Cicero thought that virtue is the chief and most essential quality of an orator: and that he should be a person of such unspotted probity as to be a pattern to his fellow citizens: without which he cannot even seem to be convinced himself of what he says; and consequently, he cannot persuade others.

B. I am sensible there is a great deal of weight in what you say; but after all, may not a man fairly employ his talents to raise himself in the world?

A. Let us look back always to the principles we laid down. we have agreed that eloquence and the profession of an orator, should be devoted to the instruction of people, and the reformation of their practice. now to do this with freedom, and success, a man must be disinterested; and must teach others to condemn death, and riches, and unmanly pleasure. he must infuse into their minds the love of moderation, frugality, a generous concern for the public good, and an inviolable regard to the laws and constitution: and the orator's zeal for all these must appear in his

* Est enim eloquentia una quaedam de summis virtutibus — quae quo major est vis, hoc est magis probitate jungenda, summaque prudentia; quarum virtutum expertibus si dicendi copiam traderimus, non eos quidem oratores effecerimus; sed furentibus quaedam arma dederimus. *De Orat. lib. iii. § 14.*

Sit ergo nobis orator quem instituimus is, qui a *M. Cicero* finitur, vir bonus dicendi

peritus — adde quod ne studio quidem operis pulcherrimi vacare mens, nisi omnibus vitiis libera, potest — quid putamus facturas cupiditatem, avaritiam, invidiam? quarum impotentissimae cogitationes, somnos etiam ipsos, et illa per quietem visa, perturbent. nihil est enim tam occupatum, tam multiforme, tot ac tam variis affectibus concisum atque laceratum, quam mala mens — *QUINT. lib. xii. cap. 1.*

conduct, as well as in his discourses. but will he who strives to please others, that he may make his fortune; and who therefore avoids disobliging any body; I say, will such an artful selfish person inculcate unacceptable truths with boldness and authority? or, if he should; will any one believe a man who does not seem to believe himself?

B. But supposing him to be in narrow circumstances, he does no harm, I hope, by endeavouring to improve them.

A. If he be pinched, let him try to mend his condition some other way. there are other professions that will easily set him above want. but if he be in such extreme distress as to depend on relief from the public; he is not yet fit to be an orator. would you chuse men that are indigent, and almost starving, to be judges in your commonwealth? would you not be afraid that their wants might expose them to corruption; or betray them into some dishonourable compliance? would you not rather chuse persons of note and distinction who are above necessity, and out of the reach of its temptations?

B. I believe I should.

A. For the same reason, if you wanted orators, that is, public masters to instruct, reclaim, and form the minds and manners of the people, would you not chuse such men as wanted nothing, and are far above little selfish aims? and if there were others who had proper talents for this superiour office, but were clogged with their personal concerns, and narrow views of private interests; would you not excuse them from shewing their eloquence till they were more easy and disen-

gaged in their circumstances; and could speak in public without being suspected of any mean design?

B. It would be better. but does not the experience of our own age plainly shew, that an orator may make his fortune by preaching rigid virtue, with great vehemence? where can we find keener satires against the prevailing corruptions of the age, and severer moral characters than those which come from the pulpit? yet people are not disturbed at them: nay they are pleased with them: and the ingenious preacher gets preferment by them.

A. It is very true: but moral instructions have no weight nor influence, when they are neither supported by clear principles, nor good examples. whom do you see converted by them? people are accustomed to hear such harangues: and are amused by them, as with so many fine scenes passing before their eyes. they hearken to such lectures just as they would read a satire: and they look on the speaker as one that acts his part well. they believe his * life, more than his talk: and

* *The clergy have one great advantage beyond all the rest of the world in this respect, besides all others, that whereas the particular callings of other men prove to them great distractions, and lay many temptations in their way, to divert them from minding their high and holy calling, of being Christians; it is quite otherwise with the clergy: the more they follow their proper callings, they do the more certainly advance their general one: the better priests they are, they become also the better Christians. every part of their calling, when well performed, raises good thoughts, and brings good ideas into their minds; and tends both to encrease their knowledge, and quicken their sense of divine matters. a priest therefore is more accountable to God, and the world for his deportment, and will be more severely accounted with, than any other person whatsoever. he is more watched over and observed than all others. very good men will be, even to a censure, jealous of him: very bad men will wait for his halting, and insult upon it: and all sorts of persons will be willing to defend themselves against the authority of his*

when they know him to be selfish, ambitious, vain, given up to sloth and luxury; and see that he parts with none of those enjoyments which he exhorts others to forsake; tho' for the sake of custom and ceremony, they hear him declaim; they believe and act as he does. but, what is worst of all; people are too apt to conclude, that men of this profession do not believe what they teach: this disparages their function: and when others preach with a sincere zeal; people will scarce believe this zeal to be sincere.

B. I cannot but own that your notions hang well together; and that they are very convincing when one considers them attentively. but tell me freely, does not all you have said on this subject flow from a pure zeal for Christian piety?

A. No: if an unbeliever reason justly, he must fall into the same train of thoughts: but indeed one must have a Christian spirit to act up to them: for it is grace alone that can suppress the disorderly emotions of self-love. when I pressed you with the authority of Socra-

doctrine and admonitions, by this, he says, but does not—the world will reverse this quite, and consider rather how a clerk lives, than what he says. they see the one; and from it conclude what he himself thinks of the other: and will think themselves not a little justified, if they can say that they did no worse than they saw their minister do before them. therefore a priest must not only abstain from gross scandals; but keep at the farthest distance from them, — such diversions as his health or the temper of his mind, may render proper for him, ought to be man-

ly, decent, and grave; and such as may neither possess his mind or time too much, nor give a bad character of him to his people. he must also avoid too much familiarity with bad people; and the squandering away his time in too much vain and idle discourse. his cheerfulness ought to be frank; but neither excessive nor licentious. his friends, and his garden ought to be his chief diversions; as his study, and his parish ought to be his chief employments.——
Bp. Burnet's disc. of the pastoral care, Ch. viii.

tes and Plato, you would not resign your judgment to theirs: and now, since reason itself begins to convince you; and that I need not inforce the truth from authorities; what if I should shew you after all, that I have only used their arguments on this subject.

B. Is it possible? I should be very glad of it.

A. Well then: Plato introduces Socrates discoursing with Gorgias, a famous rhetorician, and Callicles, one of his disciples. this Gorgias was Isocrates' master; and (as Tully tells us,) he was the first man that boasted of his being able to talk eloquently on every thing: in which ridiculous vanity he was afterwards imitated by other Greek declaimers. These two men, Gorgias, and Callicles, harangued plausibly enough on every subject; being wits that shone in conversation: and had no other business but to talk finely. however they wanted what ‡ Socrates wished every man to have; solid principles of morality, and a sedate just way of reasoning. Plato therefore having shewn what a ridiculous turn of mind these men had; he represents Socrates as diverting himself with their folly, and facetiously puzzling the two orators so much, that they could not tell him what eloquence is. then he proves that rhetoric, (which was the profession of these declaimers) is not truly an art: for, according to him,

‡ —Inventi sunt qui, cum ipsi doctrina, et ingeniis abundarent, a re autem civili et negotiis, animi quodam judicio abhorrerent, hanc dicendi exercitationem exagitarent, atque contemnerent. quorum princeps Socrates fuit, is qui omnium eruditorum testimonio, totiusque judicio *Græci-*

æ, cum prudentia, et acumine, et venustate, et subtilitate, tum vero eloquentia, varietate, copia, quamcumque in partem dedisset, *omnium* fuit facile princeps — cujus ingenium variosque sermones immortalitati scriptis suis Plato tradidit —

CICERO *de Orat.* lib. i. § 16.

‘an art is a regular discipline, which teaches men to do something that will help to make them wiser, or better than they are.’ so that he allows of no other arts but the liberal ones : and he shews that even these are perverted, when they are applied to any other end besides training up men to virtue. he proves that this was not the aim of the rhetoricians: that even Themistocles and Pericles had quite other views ; and that therefore they were not truly orators. he says those famous men only persuaded the Athenians to make harbours ; and build walls ; and obtain victories: they only made their citizens wealthy, warlike, and powerful ; and were afterwards ill-treated for it: which was really no more than they might have expected. if they had rendered the people good and virtuous by their rhetoric, they would have been sure of a just recompence: for, he who makes men upright, and good, cannot lose the reward of his labour ; seeing virtue, and ingratitude, are inconsistent. I need not tell you all the arguments he uses to shew how uselefs such false rhetoric is: for, all that I have said hitherto on this point, in my own name, is really taken from him. it will be more proper to represent to you what he says of the evils that these vain haranguers occasion in the republic.

B. It is evident that such rhetoricians were dangerous in the Grecian commonwealths, where they could mislead the people ; and usurp the government.

A. That is the chief danger that Socrates apprehended from them. but the principles he lays down, on this occasion, reach a great deal further. in fine, tho’ you and I speak now of ordering a commonwealth ; our inquiry, and conclusions are not applicable to

democracy alone; but to every kind of government, whether it be strictly a republic, an aristocracy, or a monarchy. so that the particular form of government does not enter into the present question. for in all countries, the rules of Socrates are equally useful.

C. I wish you would explain them to us.

A. He says that seeing a man is composed of a mind, and a body; he ought to improve them both. now there are two arts that concern the mind; and two others, that relate to the body. the two that belong to the mind, are moral philosophy, and the knowledge of the national laws. under the head of moral philosophy he comprehends the laws of nature and nations; and all those dictates of philosophy that are proper to govern the inclinations and manners of the whole republic, as well as of every individual member of it. he considered the second art, as a remedy that is to be used to suppress falshood, injustice, and the like disorders among the citizens: for, by it law-suits are determined; and crimes are punished. so that moral philosophy serves to prevent evil; and the knowledge of the laws and constitution, to punish it. there are likewise two arts for managing the body; the gymnastic art, which by due exercise and temperance, renders it healthy, active, vigorous, and graceful; (for, you know, Sir, the antients made a wonderful use of this art; which we have now quite lost;) and the knowledge of phyfic which cures the body, when its health is lost, or impaired. the gymnastic art assists the body, as moral philosophy doth the soul; namely to form, and improve it: and skill in medicine is helpful to the body, as the knowledge of the laws is to the mind; for correcting and curing disorders. but this wise in-

stitution was altered, says Socrates: instead of a solid practical philosophy, we have only the vain subtilty of wrangling sophists: a set of spurious philosophers who abuse reason: and, having no sense of public good, aim only at promoting their own selfish ends. instead of attaining a thorough insight into the national laws, people are amused and misled by vain-glorious ostentation of these rhetoricians, who endeavour only to please and dazzle the mind: and instead of recommending the knowledge of the public constitution, and the administration of justice, (which being the medicine of the soul, should be applyed to cure its disorderly passions,) these false orators think of nothing but how to spread their own reputation. and with regard to the body, (says Socrates) the gymnastic art begins to be exchanged for skill in dress; which gives the body but false deceitful ornaments. whereas we ought to desire only such a natural comeliness as results from health of body, and due proportion of its members; which must be acquired and preserved by temperance and exercise. the proper and seasonable use of medicine is likewise laid aside to make room for delicious dishes, and such palatable things as raise and ensnare the appetite. and instead of carrying off gross humours from the body by proper evacuations, to restore its health; nature is clogged and over-charged; and a false appetite is excited by all the various ways of luxury and intemperance. he farther observes, that those orators, who in order to cure men, should have given them bitter physic, and with authority have inculcated the most disagreeable truths; have on the contrary done for the mind, what cooks do for the body: their rhetoric is only an art of dressing up delicacies to gra-

tify the corrupted taste of the people. all their concern is to please and sooth them, by raising their curiosity and admiration. for, these declaimers harangue only for themselves. he concludes his remarks with asking, where are those citizens whom the rhetoricians have cured of their vicious habits? whom have they made sober and virtuous? thus Socrates describes the general disorders, and corruption of manners that prevailed in his time. but does he not talk like * one of the present age, who observes what passes among us; and speaks of the abuses that reign in our own days? now you have heard the sentiments of this wise heathen: what do you say of that eloquence which tends only to please, and give pretty descriptions; when (as he says) we ought to cauterize, and cut to the quick; and earnestly endeavour to cure people's minds by the bitterness of remedies, and the severity of an abstemious diet? I appeal to your own judgment in this case: if you were sick, would you be pleased with a physician, who in the extremity of your illness should waste his time, and amuse you with explaining to you some fine hypothesis in an elegant stile; instead of making pertinent inquiries into the cause, and symptoms

* — *The ornaments of speaking—are much degenerated from their original usefulness. they were at first, no doubt, an admirable instrument in the hands of wise men, when they were only employed to describe goodness, honesty, obedience; in larger, fairer, and more moving images; to represent truth cloathed with bodics; and to bring knowledge back again to our very senses, whence it was at first derived to our understanding. but* now they are generally changed to worse uses: they make the fancy disgust the best things, if they come sound and unadorned: they are in open defiance against reason; professing not to hold much correspondence with that; but with its slaves, the passions: they give the mind a motion too changeable and bewitching, to consist with right practice.— Bp. Sprat's Hist. of the royal society, p. 111, 112.

of your distemper; and prescribing suitable remedies? or, in a trial at law, where your estate, or your life were at stake, what would you think of your lawyer, if he should play the wit in your defence, and fill his pleading with flowers of rhetoric and quaint turns, instead of arguing with gravity, strength of reason, and earnestness, to gain your cause? our natural love of life, and well-being, shows us plainly the absurdity of false oratory, and of the unseasonable ostentation of it, in such cases as I have now mentioned: but we are so strangely unconcerned about religion, and the moral conduct of life, that we do not observe the same ridicule in careless, vain-glorious orators; who yet ought to be the spiritual physicians and censors of the people. indeed the sentiments of Socrates on this subject ought to make us ashamed.

B. I perceive clearly enough that, according to your reasoning, orators ought to be the defenders of the laws, and instructors of the people to teach them true wisdom and virtue. but among the Romans the rhetoric of the bar was otherwise employed.

A. That was certainly the end of it. for, when orators had not occasion to represent in their discourses, the general wants of the republic: they were obliged to protect innocence, and the rights of particular persons. and it was on this account that their profession was so much honoured; and that Tully gives us such a † lofty character of a true orator.

† Neque vero mihi quidquam praestabilius videtur, quam posse dicendo tenere hominum coetus, mentes allicere, voluntates compellere quo velit; unde autem velit, de-	ducere. haec una res in omni libero populo, maximeque in pacatis tranquillisque civitatibus praecipue semper floruit, semperque dominata est. quid enim est aut tam admi-
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B. Let us hear then how orators ought to speak. I long to know your thoughts on this point: seeing you deny the finical, florid manner of Isocrates, which is so much admired and imitated by others.

A. Instead of giving you my own opinion, I shall go on to lay before you the rules that the antients give us: but I shall only touch upon the chief points: for, I suppose, you do not expect that I should enter into an endless detail of the precepts of rhetoric. there are but too many useless ones; which you must have read in those books where they are copiously explained. it will be enough if we consider the most important rules. Plato in his *Phaedrus* shews us, that the greatest fault of rhetoricians is their studying the art of persuasion, before they have learned, (from the principles of true philosophy,) what those things are of which they ought to persuade men. he would have orators begin with the study of mankind in general; and then apply themselves to the knowledge of the particular genius and manners of those whom they may have occasion to instruct and persuade. so that they ought first of all to know the nature of man, his chief end, and his true interest; the parts of which he is composed, his mind, and his body; and the true way to make him happy: they ought likewise to un-

rabile, quam ex infinita multitudine hominum existere unum, qui id quod omnibus natura sit datum, vel solus, vel cum paucis facere possit? — aut tam potens, tamque magnificum, quam populi motus, iudicum religiones, senatus gravitatem, unius oratione converti? — ac ne plura, quae

sunt pene innumerabilia, confecer, comprehendam brevi; sic enim statuo, perfecti oratoris moderatione, et sapientia, non solum ipsius dignitatem, sed et privatorum plurimorum, et universae reipublicae salutem maxime contineri — *Cic. de Orat. lib. i. §. 8.*

derstand his passions, the disorders they are subject to, and the art of governing them; how they may be usefully raised, and employed on what is truly good; and, in fine, the proper rules to make him live in peace, and become entirely sociable. after this general study, comes that which is particular. orators ought to know the laws and customs of their country; and how far they are agreeable to the genius and temper of the people; what are the manners of the several ranks and conditions among them; their different ways of education; the common prejudices, and separate interests that prevail in the present age; and the most proper way to instruct and reform the people. you see, Sir, this knowledge comprehends all the solid parts of philosophy and politics. so that Plato meant to shew us, that none but a philosopher can be a true orator. and it is in this sense we must understand all he says in his *Gorgias*, against the rhetoricians; I mean, that set of men who made profession of talking finely, and persuading others: without endeavouring to know, from solid philosophy, what one ought to teach them. in short, according to Plato, the true art of oratory consists in understanding those useful truths of which we ought to convince people; and the art of moving their passions, in order to persuasion. * Cicero says almost the very same things. he seems, at first, to think that

* *Ac mea quidem sententia nemo poterit esse omni laude cumulatus orator, nisi erit omnium rerum magnarum, atque artium scientiam consecutus. De Orat. lib. i. §. 6. oratorem plenum atque perfectum esse eum dicam, qui de omnibus rebus possit varie*

copioseque dicere. Ibid. §. 13. verum enim oratori quae sunt in hominum vita, quandoquidem in ea versetur orator, atque ea est ei subjecta materies, omnia quæ sita, audita, lecta, disputata, tractata, agitata esse debent. Lib. iii. §. 14.

an orator should know every thing; because that he may have occasion to speak on all sorts of subjects; and (as Socrates observed before him) † a man can never talk well on a point of which he is not intirely master. but afterwards, because of the pressing necessities and shortness of life, Tully insists only upon those parts of knowledge that he thinks the most necessary for an orator. he would have him at least well instructed in all that part of * philosophy which relates to the conduct and affairs of social life. but above all things he would have an orator † know the frame of man, both with regard to his soul, and body, and the natural tendency and force of his passions; because the great end of eloquence is to move the secret springs of them. he reckons the †† knowledge of

† Etenim ex rerum cognitione efflorescat, et redundet oportet oratio: quae, nisi subest res ab oratore percepta, et cognita, inanem quandam habet elocutionem, et pene puerilem. *De Orat. lib. i. §. 6.*

* Positum sit igitur in primis— sine philosophia non posse effici, quem quaerimus eloquentem — nec vero sine philosophorum disciplina, genus, et speciem cuiusque rei cernere, neque eam definiendo explicare, nec tribuere in partes possumus: nec judicare quae vera, quae falsa sint; neque cernere consequentia, repugnantia videre, ambigua distinguere. quid dicam de natura rerum cujus cognitio magnam orationis suppetitat copiam? de vita, de officiis,

de virtute, de moribus? *Orat. §. 4.*

† Omnes animorum motus, quos hominum generi rerum natura tribuit, penitus pernoscenti.— *De Orat. lib. i. §. 5.* — num admoveri possit oratio ad sensus animorum, atque motus vel inflammandos, vel etiam extinguendos (quod unum in oratore dominatur,) sine diligentissima per investigatione earum omnium rationum quae de naturis humani generis, ac moribus, a philosophis explicantur— *De Orat. lib. i. §. 14.* quare hic locus de vita et moribus, totus est oratori petdiscedendus. *Ibid. §. 15.*

†† Bibliothecas mehercule omnium philosophorum unus mihi videtur duodecim tabularum *Bibliotheca*, si quis legum

the laws, and constitution, to be the foundation of all public discourses: but he does not think a thorough insight into all the particular cases and questions in law to be necessary; because, upon occasion, one may have recourse to experienced lawyers, whose peculiar profession it is to understand and disentangle such intricate points. he thinks, with Plato, that an orator should be a * master of reasoning; and know how to define, and argue, and unravel the most specious sophisms. he says we destroy eloquence, if we should separate it from philosophy: for then, instead of wise orators, we should have only trifling injudicious declaimers. he further requires not only an exact knowledge of all the principles of ethics; but likewise that the orator be fully acquainted with † antiquity. he

fontes, et capita viderit, et auctoritatis pondere et utilitatis ubertate superare. ac si nos, id quod maxime debet, nostra patria delectat. — cuius primum nobis mens, mos, disciplina nota esse debet: vel quia est patria, parens omnium nostrum, vel quia tanta sapientia fuisse in jure constituendo putanda est, quanta fuit in his tantis operibus imperii comparandis. *De Orat. lib. i. §. 44.*

* Nec vero dialecticis modo sit instructus, sed habeat omnes philosophiae notos, et tractatos locos. nihil enim de religione, nihil de morte, nihil de pietate, nihil de caritate patriae; nihil de bonis rebus, aut malis; nihil de virtutibus, aut vitiis — nihil, in-

quam, sine ea scientia, quam dixi, graviter, ample, copiose dici, et explicari potest. *Orat. §. 33.*

† Cognoscat etiam rerum gestarum et memoriae veteris ordinem, maxime scilicet nostrae civitatis; sed et imperiorum populorum et regum illustrium — nescire enim quid antea, quam natus sis, acciderit, id est semper esse puerum — commemoratio autem antiquitatis, exemplorumque prolatio summa cum delectatione, et auctoritatem orationi affert, et fidem. *Orat. §. 34.* — apud Graecos autem eloquentissimi homines remoti a causis forensibus, cum ad caeteras res illustres, tum ad scribendam historiam maxime se applicaverunt. namque et He-

recommends the careful perusal of the antient Greek writers, especially the historians; both for their stile, and for the historical facts they relate. He particularly enjoins ‡ the study of the poets: because of the great resemblance there is betwixt the figures of poetry, and those of eloquence. in fine, he often declares that an orator ought to furnish his mind with a clear comprehensive view of things, before he attempt to speak in public. I fancy I could almost repeat some of his words on this subject; so often have I read them; and so strong an impression did they make on my thoughts. you will be surprized to see how much knowledge, and how many * qualities he requires. ‘ an orator, says he, ought to have the acuteness of logicians, the knowledge of philosophers, the stile almost of the poets; the elocution and gesture of the finest ac-

rodotus —et post illum Thucydides omnes dicendi artificio mea sententia facile vicit — denique etiam a philosophia profectus princeps Xenophon—*De Orat. lib. ii. §. 13, 14.*

‡ Legendi etiam poetæ, cognoscenda historia, omnium bonarum artium scriptores.—*De Orat. lib. i. §. 34.* est enim finitimus oratori poeta, numeris adstrictior paulo, verborum autem licentia liberior; multis vero ornandi generibus socius ac pene par; in hoc quidem certe prope idem, nullis ut terminis circumscribat aut definiat jus suum, quo minus ei liceat eadem illa facultate, et copia vagari qua velit.—*Ibid. §. 16.*

* Non quaeritur mobilitas linguae, non celeritas verborum, non denique ea quae nobis non possumus fingere, facies, vultus, sonus. in oratore autem acumen dialecticorum, sententiae philosophorum, verba prope poetarum, memoria juris consultorum, vox traegedorum, gestus pene summorum actorum, est requirendus. quamobrem nihil in hominum genere rarius perfectio oratore inveniri potest: quae enim singularum rerum artifices, singula si mediocriter adepti sunt, probantur, ea nisi omnia summa sunt in oratore, probari non possunt.—*De Orat. lib. i. §. 28.*

'tors.' consider now how much application must be necessary to attain all this.

C. I have observed indeed, on several occasions, that some orators, tho' they have good natural parts, want a fund of solid knowledge. their heads seem unfurnished: and one cannot but perceive they labour hard for matter to fill up their discourses. they do not seem to speak from the abundance of their hearts, as if they were full of useful truths: but they talk as if they were at a loss for the very next thing they are to say.

A. Cicero takes notice of these kind of people; who live always, as it were, from hand to mouth, without laying up any stock of provision. but the discourses of such declaimers appear always thin and half-starved, whatever pains they take about them. tho' these men could afford three months for studying a public harangue, such particular preparations, however troublesome, must needs be very imperfect: and any judicious hearer will easily discern their defects. they ought to have employed several years in laying up a plentiful store of solid notions: and then after such a general preparation, their particular discourses would cost them but little pains. whereas if a man, without this preparatory study, lay out all his application upon particular subjects, he is forced to put off his hearers with * florid expressions, gaudy metaphors, and jing-

* There are two extremes to be avoided with the utmost care, the frigid stile, and the boyish. the former renders a discourse dry and insipid, by a languor and flatness of expression: the latter renders it ungrateful and shocking, by a swelling loftiness, and affected amplification — those who use the frigid stile, employ pompous expressions when the subject requires plain ones: and they who affect the boyish stile, make use of low expressions when the matter requires the loftiest. but our language is become so modest, so re-

ling antitheses. he delivers nothing but indeterminate common-place notions; and patches together shreds of learning and rhetoric which any one may see were not made one for another. he never goes to the bottom of things, but stops in superficial remarks, and oft-times in false ones. he is not able to shew truths in their proper light, and full extent; because all general truths are necessarily connected among themselves: so that one must understand almost all of them, before he can treat judiciously of any one.

C. However many of our public speakers get repute by those slight attainments you so much despise.

A. It is true, they are applauded by women and the undiscerning multitude, who are easily dazzled and imposed on: but this repute is very precarious; and could not subsist long if it were not supported by a cabal of acquaintance, and the zeal or humour of a party. they who know the true end and * rules of elo-

served, and so scrupulous, that the frigid stile includes all such expressions as are too strong, or too sparkling; too bold and hardy metaphors, and frequent turns of wit. and the boyish stile comprehends strokes of humour, and quaint conceits upon serious subjects; too loose

and heavy repetitions in those parts of a discourse that ought to be close and concise; too violent exaggerations, and too laborious figures.

Mr. Rapin. vol. ii. Reflexions sur l'éloquence.

* Expression is the dress of thought, and still
Appears more decent, as more suitable:
A low conceit in pompous words express'd,
Is like a clown in regal purple dress'd.
For different styles with different subjects sort,
As several garbs with country, town, and court.
Some by old words to fame have made pretence:
Antients in phrase, mere moderns in their sense!
Such labour'd nothings, in so strange a style,
Amaze th' unlearn'd, and make the learned smile.

Mr. Pope's essay on criticism.

quence, cannot hear such empty vain haranguers without satiety, disgust, and contempt.

C. It seems then you would have a man wait several years before he attempt to speak in public: for the flower of his age must be spent in attaining that vast fund of knowledge you reckon necessary to an orator: and then he must be so far advanced in years, that he will have but little time to exert his talents.

A. I would have him begin to exert them betimes: for I know very well how great the power of action is. but under the pretence of exercising his parts, I would not have him immediately engage himself in any kind of employment that will take off his mind from his studies. A youth may try his skill, from time to time: but for several years, a careful perusal of the best authors ought to be his main business.

C. Your judicious observation puts me in mind of a preacher I am acquainted with; who lives, as you say, from hand to mouth; and never thinks of any subject till he be obliged to treat of it: and then he shuts himself up in his closet, turns over his concordance, Combesix and Polyanthea, his collections of sermons; and common-place book of separate sentences and quotations that he has gathered together.

A. You cannot but perceive, Sir, that this method will never make him an able judicious preacher. in such cases, a man cannot talk with strength and clearness: he is not sure of any thing he says: nor doth any thing flow easily from him. his whole discourse has a borrowed air; and looks like an awkward piece of patch-work. certainly those are much to be blamed, who are so impatiently fond of showing their parts.

B. Before you leave us, Sir, pray tell us what you reckon the chief effect of eloquence.

A. Plato says an oration is so far eloquent as it affects the hearer's mind. by this rule you may judge certainly of any discourse you hear. if an harangue leave you cold and languid; and only amuses your mind, instead of enlightening it; if it does not move your heart and passions, however florid and pompous it may be, it is not truly eloquent. Tully approves of Plato's sentiments on this point; and tells us † that the whole drift and force of a discourse should tend to move those secret springs of action that nature has placed in the hearts of men. would you then consult your own mind to know whether those you hear be truly eloquent? if they make a lively impression upon you, and gain your attention and assent to what they say; if they move and animate your passions, so as to ‡ raise you above yourself, you may be assured they are true orators. but if instead of affecting you thus, they only please or divert you, and make you admire the brightness of their thoughts, or the beauty and propriety of their language, you may freely pronounce them to be mere declaimers.

B. Stay a little, Sir, if you please, till I ask you a few more questions.

A. I wish I could stay longer, gentlemen; for your conversation is very engaging: but I have an affair to dispatch which will not admit of a delay. to-morrow I will wait on you again: and then we shall finish this subject at our leisure.

B. Adieu, then, Sir, till to-morrow.

† Lib. I. §. 5. lib. II. §. | ‡ See Longinus. §. vii.
32.

THE SECOND DIALOGUE.

B. **Y**OU are extremely kind, Sir, in coming so punctually. your conversation yesterday was so agreeably instructive, that we longed impatiently to hear you again upon the same subject.

C. For my part, I made what haste I could, lest I should have come too late: for, I was unwilling to lose any part of your discourse.

A. Such conferences are very useful, among those who really love truth, and talk with temper: for then they exchange their best thoughts, and express them as clearly as they can. as for myself, gentlemen, I find an advantage in conversing with you; seeing you are not displeased at the freedom I take.

B. Let us leave off compliments, Sir; I know best how to judge of myself: and I perceive clearly that without your assistance I should have continued in several errors. I intreat you, Sir, to go on, and set me intirely right in my notions of eloquence.

A. Your mistakes, (if you will allow me to call them so,) prevail among most people of worth and learning who have not examined this matter to the bottom.

B. Let us not lose time in preamble: we shall have a thousand things to say. proceed therefore, Sir, to rectify my mistakes; and begin at the point where we left off yesterday.

A. Of what point were we talking, when we parted? I have really forgot.

C. You were speaking of that kind of eloquence which consists intirely in moving the passions.

B. Yes: but I could not well comprehend that the

whole design of rhetoric is to move the passions. is that your opinion, Sir?

A. By no means.

C. It seems then I mistook you yesterday.

A. What would you say of a man who should persuade without any proof; and affect his hearers, without enlightening them? you could not reckon him a true orator. he might seduce people by this art of persuading them to what he would, without shewing them that what he recommends is right. such a person must prove very dangerous in the commonwealth: as we have seen before from the reasoning of Socrates.

B. It is very true.

A. But on the other hand, what would you think of a man, who in his public discourses should demonstrate the truth, in a plain, dry, exact, methodical manner; or make use of the geometrical way of reasoning; without adding any thing to adorn or enliven his discourse? would you reckon him an orator?

B. No: I should think him a philosopher only.

A. To make a compleat orator then, we must find a philosopher who knows both how to demonstrate any truth; and at the same time, to give his accurate reasoning all the natural beauty and vehemence of an agreeable, moving discourse, to render it entirely eloquent. and herein lies the difference betwixt the clear convincing method of philosophy; and the affecting, persuasive art of eloquence.

C. What do you say is the difference?

A. I say a philosopher's aim is merely to demonstrate the truth, and gain your assent; while the orator not only convinces your judgment, but commands your passions.

C. I do not take your meaning exactly yet. when a hearer is fully convinced, what is there more to be done?

A. There is still wanting what an orator would do more than a metaphysician, in proving the existence of God. the metaphysician would give you a plain demonstration of it; and stop at the speculative view of that important truth. but the orator would further add whatever is proper to excite the most affecting sentiments in your mind; and make you love that glorious being whose existence he had proved. and this is what we call persuasion.

C. Now I understand you perfectly well.

A. You see then what reason Cicero had to say, that we must never separate philosophy from eloquence. for, the art of persuading without wisdom, and previous instruction, must be pernicious: and wisdom alone, without the art of persuasion, can never have a sufficient influence on the minds of men; nor allure them to the love and practice of virtue. I thought it proper to observe this by the by, to shew you how much those of the last age were mistaken in their notions of this matter. for, on the one hand there were some men of polite learning, who valued nothing but the purity of languages, and books elegantly written; but having no solid principles of knowledge, with their politeness and erudition, they were generally Libertines. on the other hand, there were a set of dry, formal scholars, who delivered their instructions in such a perplexed, dogmatical, unaffecting manner as disgusted every body. Excuse this digression. I return now to the point; and must remind you that persuasion has this advantage beyond mere conviction,

or demonstration; that it not only sets truth in the fullest light, but represents it as amiable; and engages men to love and pursue it. * the whole art of eloquence therefore consists in enforcing the clearest proofs of any truth, with such powerful motives as may affect the hearers, and employ their passions to just and worthy ends; to raise their indignation, at ingratitude; their horror, against cruelty: their compassion, for the miserable; their love, of virtue: and to direct every other passion to its proper objects. this is what Plato calls affecting the minds of an audience; and moving their bowels. do you understand me, Sir?

B. Very plainly: and I see too that eloquence is not a trifling invention to amuse and dazzle people with pompous language; but that it is a very serious art; and serviceable to morality.

A. It is both a serious and a difficult art. for which reason Tully said he had heard several persons declaim in an elegant engaging manner; but that there were but very few compleat orators, who knew how to seize, and captivate the heart.

C. I am not surprized at that: for I see but very few who aim at it: nay I freely own that Cicero himself who lays down this rule, seems oftentimes to forget it. what do you think of those rhetorical flowers

* — Omnes animorum motus, quos hominum generi rerum natura tribuit, penitus pernoscenti; quod omnis vis ratioque dicendi in eorum qui audiunt, mentibus aut sedandis, aut excitandis, exprimenda est. Cic. *de Orat. lib. i. §. 5.* Maximaque pars orationis admovenda est ad animo-

rum motus nonnunquam aut cohortatione, aut commemoratione aliqua, aut in spem, aut in metum, aut ad cupiditatem, aut ad gloriam concitandos: saepe etiam a temeritate, iracundia, spe, injuria, crudelitate revocandos. *Ibid. lib. ii. §. 82.*

with which he embellisheth his harangues? they might amuse the fancy, but could not touch the heart.

A. We must distinguish, Sir, betwixt Tully's orations. those he composed in his youth (when he chiefly aimed at establishing his character,) have oft-times the gay defect you speak of. he was then full of ambition; and far more concerned for his own fame, than for the justice of his cause. and this will always be the case when people employ one to plead for them, who regards their business no farther than as it gives him an opportunity of distinguishing himself, and of shining in his profession. thus we find that among the Romans their pleading at the bar, was oft-times nothing else but a pompous declamation. after all, we must own that Tully's * youthful and most elaborate orations shew a great deal of his moving and persuasive

* Nunc causa perorata, res ipsa et periculi magnitudo, *C. Aquilli*, cogere videtur, ut te, atque eos, qui tibi in consilio sunt, obsecret, obtesteturque *P. Quintius* per senectutem ac solitudinem suam, nihil aliud, nisi ut vestrae naturae, bonitatisque obsequamini: ut, cum veritas haec faciat, plus hujus inopia possit ad misericordiam quam illius opes ad crudelitatem — si quae pudore ornamenta sibi peperit, *Naevii*, ea potest contra petulantiam, te defendente, obtinere; spes est et hunc miserum atque infelicem aliquando tandem posse consistere. sin et poterit *Naevius* id quod libet; et ei libebit, quod non licet; quid agendum est? qui Deus appel-

landus est? cujus hominis fides imploranda? — ab ipso [*Naevio*] repudiatus, ab amicis ejus non sublevatus; ab omni magistratu agitatus atque perterritus, quem praeter te appellet, [*C. Aquilli*] habet neminem; tibi se, tibi suas omnes opes fortunasque commendat: tibi committit existimationem ac spem reliquae vitae. multis vexatus contumeliis, plurimis jactatus injuriis non turpis ad te, sed miser confugit; e fundo ornatissimo dejectus, ignominiis omnibus appetitus — itaque te hoc obsecrat, *C. Aquilli*, ut quam existimationem, quam honestatem in judicium tuum, prope acta jam aetate decursaque attulit, eam liceat ei secum ex

art. but to form a just notion of it, we must observe the harangues he made in his more advanced age, for the necessities of the republic. for then, the experience he had in the weightiest affairs, the love of liberty, and the fear of those calamities that hung over his head, made him display the utmost efforts of his eloquence. when he endeavoured to support and revive expiring liberty, and to animate the commonwealth against Antony his enemy; you do not see him use points of wit and quaint antitheses: he is then truly eloquent. every thing seems artless, as it ought to be when one is vehement. with a negligent air he delivers the most natural and affecting sentiments; and says every thing that can move and animate the passions.

C. You have often spoke of witty conceits and quaint turns. pray, what do you mean by these expressions? for I can scarce distinguish those witty turns from the other ornaments of discourse. in my opinion, all the embellishments of speech flow from wit, and a vigorous fancy.

A. But Tully thinks, there are many expressions that owe all their beauty and ornament to their force and propriety; and to the nature of the subject they are applied to.

C. I do not exactly understand these terms: be pleased to shew me in a familiar way, how I may readily

hoc loco efferre; ne is, de cuius officio nemo unquam dubitavit, sexagesimo denique anno, dedecore, macula, turpissimaeque ignominia notetur: ne ornamentis ejus omnibus, *Sex. Naevius* pro spo-

liis abutatur: ne per te ferat, quo minus, quae existimatio *P. Quintium* usque ad senectutem perduxit, eadem usque ad rogum prosequatur. *Cic. Orat. pro P. Quintio.*

distinguish betwixt a flash of wit, (or quaint turn,) and a solid ornament, or * noble delicate thought.

A. Reading, and observation will teach you best: there are a hundred different sorts of witty conceits.

C. But pray, Sir, tell me at least some general mark by which I may know them: is it affectation?

A. Not every kind of affectation: but a fond desire to please, and shew one's wit.

C. This gives me some little light: but I want still some distinguishing marks, to direct my judgment.

A. I will give you one then, which perhaps will satisfy you. we have seen that eloquence consists not only in giving clear convincing proofs; but likewise in the art of moving the passions. now in order to move them, we must be able to paint them well; with their various objects, and effects. so that I think the whole art of oratory may be reduced to proving, painting, and raising the passions. now all those pretty, sparkling, quaint thoughts that do not tend to one of these ends, are only witty conceits.

C. What do you mean by painting? I never heard that term applyed to rhetoric.

A. To † paint, is not only to describe things; but

* True wit is nature to advantage dress'd,
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well express'd;
Something, whose truth convinc'd at sight we find,
That gives us back the image of our mind.
As shades more sweetly recommend the light:
So modest plainness sets off sprightly wit.
For works may have more wit than does them good;
As bodies perish through excess of blood.

Mr. Pope's essay on criticism. p. 23.

† See Longinus. §. xv.

to represent the circumstances of them, in such a † lively sensible manner, that the hearer shall fancy he almost sees them with his eyes. for instance: if a dry historian were to give an account of Dido's death, he would only say; she was overwhelmed with sorrow after the departure of Aeneas; and that she grew weary of her life: so she went up to the top of her palace; and lying down on her funeral-pile, she stabbed herself. now these words would inform you of the fact; but you do not see it. when you read the story in * Virgil, he sets

† Plus est evidentia, vel ut alii dicunt, repraesentatio, quam perspicuitas: et illud quidem patet: haec se quodammodo ostendit — magna virtus est, res de quibus loquimur, clare atque ut *cerni videntur*, enunciare. non enim satis efficit, neque ut debet plene dominatur oratio, si

usque ad aures volet, atque ea sibi iudex de quibus cognoscit, *narrari credit, non exprimi, et oculis mentis ostendi* — atque hujus summae, iudicio quidem meo, virtutis facillima est via. *naturam* intueamur, hanc *sequamur* —

Quintil. lib. viii. c. 3.

* Talia dicentem jamdudum averſa tuetur,
Huc illuc volvens oculos, totumque pererrat
Luminibus tacitis, et ſic accenſa profatur:
Heu! furiis incenſa feror —
Tum vero infelix ſatis exterrita Dido,
Mortem orat: taedet coeli convexa tueri.
Ergo ubi concepit furias, eviſta dolore,
Decrevitque mori; tempus ſecum ipſa modumque
Exigit —

At regina pyra, penetrali in ſede, ſub auras
Ereſta ingenti, taedis atque ilice ſecta
Intenditque locum ſertis, et fronde coronat
Funera: ſuper exuvias, enſemque relictum,
Effigiemque toro locat — et crines effuſa ſacerdos
Tercentum tonat ore Deos —
Ipſa mola, manibusque piis, altaria juxta
Unum exuta pedem vinclis, in veſte recincta
Teſtatur moritura Deos, et conſcia ſati
Sidera: tum, ſi quod non aequo ſoedere amantes
Curae numen habet, juſtumque memorque precatur.

it before your eyes. when he represents all the circumstances of Dido's despair; describes her wild rage; and death already staring in her aspect; when he makes her speak at the sight of the picture and sword that Aeneas left, your imagination transports you to Carthage; where you see the † Trojan fleet leaving the shore, and the queen quite inconsolable. you enter into all her passions, and into the sentiments of the supposed spectators. it is not Virgil you then hear: you are too attentive to the ‡ last words of unhappy Dido, to

Nox erat: et placidum carpebant fessâ soporem
Corpora per terras; silvaeque et saeva quierant
Æquora: cum medio volvuntur sidera lapsu:
Cum tacet omnis ager; pecudes, pictaeque volucres,
Quaeque lacus late liquidos, quaeque aspera dumis
Rura tenent, somno positae sub nocte silenti
Lenibant curas, et corda oblita laborum.

At non infelix animi Phoenissâ; neque unquam
Solvitur in somnos, oculisve aut pectore noctem
Accipit: ingeminant curae, rursusque resurgens
Saevit amor, magnoque irarum fluctuat aestu. —

- † Et jam prima novo spargebat lumine terras
Tithoni croceum linquens aurora cubile:
Regina e speculis ut primum albescere lucem
Vidit, et aequatis classẽ procedere velis;
Littoraque, et vacuos sensit sine remige portus;
Terque quaterque manu pectus percussa decorum,
Flaventesque abscissa comas: prò *Jupiter* ibit
Hic, ait, et nostris illuserit advena regnis?
Non arma expedient? totaque ex urbe sequentur?
Diripientque rates alii navalibus? ite,
Ferte citi flammas, date vela, impellite remos.
Quid loquor? aut ubi sum? quae mentem insania mutat?
Infelix *Dido*! num te facta impia tangunt?
Haec ait: et partes animum versabat in omnes,
Invisam quaerens quamprimum abrumperẽ lucem.
- ‡ At trepida, et coeptis immanibus effera *Dido*
Sanguineam volvens aciem, maculisque trementes
Interfusa genas, et pallida morte futura,
Interiora domus irrumpit limina, et altos

think of him. the poet disappears: and we see only what he describes; and hear those only whom he makes to speak. such is the force of a natural imitation, and of painting in language. hence it comes that the painters and the poets are so nearly related: the one paints for the eyes; and the other for the ears: but both of them ought to convey the liveliest pictures to people's imagination. I have taken an example from a poet to give you a livelier image of what I mean by painting in eloquence: for poets paint in a stronger manner

Conscendit furibunda rogos, ensèque recludit
Dardanium; non hos quaesitum munus in usus.
Hic postquam Iliacas vestes, notumque cubile
Conspexit, paulum lachrymis, et mente morata
Incubuitque toro, dixitque novissima verba:
Dulces exuviae! dum fata deusque sinebant,
Accipite hanc animam, meque his exsolvite curis.
Vixi, et quem dederat cursum fortuna peregi:
Dixit: et os impressa toro, moriemur inultae?
Sed moriamur, ait. sic, sic juvat ire sub umbras.
Hauriat hunc oculis ignem crudelis ab alto
Dardanus, et nostrae secum ferat omina mortis.
Dixerat: atque illam media inter talia ferro
Collapsam aspiciunt comites, ensèque cruore
Spumantem, sparsasque manus. it clamor ad alta
Atria: concussam bacchatur fama per urbem
Lamentis gemituque, et semineo ululatu
Tecta fremunt: resonat magnis plangoribus aether.
Audiit exanimis, trepidoque exterrita cursu
Unguibus ora foror foedans, et pectora pugnīs
Per medios ruit, ac morientem nomine clamat.
—— Sic fata, gradus evaserat altos,
Semianimemque, sinu germanam amplexa fovebat
Cum gemitu, atque atros siccatbat veste cruores.
Illa graves oculos conata attollere, rursus
Deficit: infixum stridet sub pectore vulnus.
Ter sese attollens, cubitoque adnixa levavit:
Ter revoluta toro est; oculisque errantibus, alto
Quaesivit coelo lucem, ingemuitque reperta.

Virg. *Aeneid. lib. iv.*

than orators. Indeed the main thing in which poetry differs from eloquence is, that the poet paints with enthusiasm, and gives bolder touches than the orator. but prose allows of painting in a moderate degree: for, without lively descriptions it is impossible to warm the hearer's fancy, or to stir his passions. a plain narrative does not move people: we must not only inform them of facts; but * strike their senses, by a lively moving representation of the manner and circumstances of the facts we relate.

C. I never reflected on this before. but seeing what you call painting is essential to oratory; does it not follow that there can be no true eloquence, without a due mixture of poetry?

A. You are right: only we must exclude versification; that is, a strict regard to the quantity of syllables, and the order of words in which the poet is obliged to express his thoughts, according to the measure or verse he writes in. versification indeed, if it be in rhyme, is what injudicious people reckon to be

* Τῆς δὲ ῥητορικῆς φαντασίας κάλλιστον αἰεὶ τὸ ἔμπρακτον καὶ ἐνάληθες. —καλεῖται μὲν γὰρ κοινῶς φαντασία, πᾶν ἐννόημα λόγῳ γεννητικὸν ὁποσοῦν παριστάμενον· ἰδίως δ' ἐπὶ τέτων κεκράτηκε τὸ νομα, ὅταν ἂν λέξης ὑπὸ ἐνδο- σισμοῦ καὶ πάθος βλέπειν δοκῇ, καὶ ὑπ' ὅψιν τιθῇ	τοῖς ἀκέσιν—Τί ἔν ἡ ῥητορικῇ φαντασία δύνα- ται; πολλὰ μὲν ἴσως καὶ ἄλλα τοῖς λόγοις ἐναγώνια καὶ ἐμπαθεῖ προσεισφέρειν· καλακρινὰ μένη μέντοι ταῖς πραγματικαῖς ἐπιχειρή- σεσιν, καὶ πείθει τὸν ἀκροα- τὴν μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ δουλεύ- ται. Longinus. §. xv.
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the whole of poetry. some fancy themselves to be poets, because they have spoken or writ in measured words: but there are many who make verses, without poetry: and others are very † poetical without making verses. if therefore we set versifying aside, poetry in other respects is only a lively fiction that paints nature. and if one has not this genius for painting, he will never be able to imprint things on the hearer's mind: but his discourse will be flat, languid, and wearisome. ever since the fall of Adam, men's thoughts have been so low and grovelling, that they are unattentive to moral truths; and can scarce conceive any thing but what affects their senses. in this consists the degeneracy of human nature. people grow soon weary of contemplation: intellectual ideas do not strike their imagination: so that we must use sensible and ‡ familiar images to support their attention, and convey abstracted truths to their minds. hence it came, that soon after the fall, the religion of all the antients consisted of poetry and idolatry; which were always joined together in their various schemes of superstition. but let us not wander too far—you see plainly that poe-

† *The adventures of Telemachus, composed by our ingenious author, are intirely written in that poetic prose he here speaks of. M. Bossu the greatest modern critic, does not think that work can be called a poem; but he owns the distinction that our author here takes notice of. 'there is good reason (says he) to distinguish such artless composures (tur-*

ned into verse) from true poetry, by giving them the name of versification; and to make of versification, and poetry, as it were two different arts. and indeed, is there a greater difference betwixt grammar, and rhetoric; than betwixt the art of making verses, and that of inventing a poem?' Traité du poëme epique. liv. i. ch. 5.

‡ *Respicere exemplar vitae morumque jubebo*

Doctum imitorem, et veras hinc ducere voces.

HOR. de A. P.

try, I mean, the lively painting of things, is, as it were, the very soul of eloquence.

C. But if true orators be poets; I should think that poets are orators too: for poetry is very proper to persuade.

A. Yes; they have the very same end. all the difference betwixt them consists in what I have told you. orators are not possessed with that enthusiasm which fires the poet's breast, and renders him more lively, more sublime, and bolder in expression. you remember the passage I quoted from Cicero.

C. Which? is it not —

A. That an orator ought to have the stile almost of a poet: that almost points out the difference between them.

C. I understand you. but you do not come to the point you proposed to explain to us.

A. Which?

C. The rule for distinguishing betwixt witty turns, and solid ornaments.

A. You will soon comprehend that. for of what use in discourse can any ornament be, that does not tend either to prove, to paint, or to affect?

C. It may serve to please.

A. We must distinguish here between such ornaments as only please; and those that both please, and persuade. that which serves to please in order to persuade, is good and solid: thus we are pleased with strong and clear arguments. the just and natural emotions of an orator have much grace and beauty in them: and his exact and lively painting charms us. so that all the necessary parts of eloquence are apt to please: but yet pleasing is not their true aim. the

question is, whether we shall approve such thoughts and expressions as may perhaps give an amusing delight; but in other respects, are altogether useless: and these I call quaint turns, and points of wit. you must remember now that I allow of all those graces of style, and delicate thoughts that tend to persuasion: I only reject those vain affected ornaments that the self-conceited author uses, to paint his own character, and amuse others with his wit; instead of filling their minds entirely with his subject. in fine; I think we ought to condemn not only all jingle, and playing with words, as a thing extremely mean and boyish; but even all witty conceits, and fanciful turns; I mean, such thoughts as only flash and glitter upon the fancy; but contain nothing that is solid, and conducive to persuasion.

C. I could agree to that; but that I am afraid such severity would retrench the chief beauties of discourse.

A. Do not you reckon Homer and Virgil very agreeable authors? are they not the most delicate you ever read? and yet in them you do not find what we call points of wit. their poems are full of a noble simplicity: their art is entirely concealed: * nature itself appears in all that they say. we do not find a single word that seems purposely designed to shew the poet's wit.

* *When first young Maro sung of kings and wars,
'Ere warning Phoebus touch'd his trembling ears,
Perhaps he seem'd above the critic's law,
And but from nature's fountains scorn'd to draw:
But when t' examine every part he came,
Nature, and Homer, were, he found, the same.
Learn hence for antient rules a just esteem;
To copy nature is to copy them.*

Mr. Pope's essay on criticism. p. 13.

* they thought it their greatest glory never to appear; but to employ our attention on the objects they describe: as a painter endeavours to set before your eyes wide forests, mountains, rivers, distant views, and buildings; or the adventures, actions, and different passions of men, in such a lively manner, that you cannot trace the masterly strokes of his pencil: for art looks mean and coarse when it is perceived. Plato (who had examined this matter more thoroughly than any other orator, or critic,) assures us that in composing, the † poet should always keep out of sight, make himself be quite forgot by his readers, and re-

* Καὶ μοι εἶπέ· ἐπί- ὥπερ αὐτὸς ὢν ὁ Χρῦσης
 σασαί τῆς Ἰλιάδος τὰ λέγει, καὶ περὶ αὐτῶν ἡμᾶς
 πρῶτα, ἐνοῖς ὁ ποιητὴς φη- ὅτι μάλιστα ποιῆσαι μὴ
 σὶ τὸν μὲν Χρῦσιν δεῖσθαι Ὀμηρον δοκεῖν εἶναι τὸν λέ-
 τῆς Ἀγαμέμνονος ἀπολῦ- γοντα, ἀλλὰ τὸν ἱερέα
 σαι τὴν θυγατέρα, τὸν δὲ πρεσβύτην ὄντα· καὶ τὴν
 χαλεπαίνειν.—οἷοδ' οὖν ἄλλην δὲ πᾶσαν χεδόν τι
 ὅτι μέχρι μὲν τῶν τῶν ἔτω πεποιήσας διήγησιν πε-
 πῶν, ρὶ τε ἥρ' ἐν Ἰλίῳ καὶ περὶ
 ἥρ' ἐν Ἰθάκῃ καὶ ὅλην Ὀδυσ-
 σεία παθημάτων.

— καὶ ἐλίπετο πάντας

Ἀχαιῶς,

Ἀτρεΐδα δὲ μάλιστα, δύω

κοσμήτορε λαῶν—

λέγει τε αὐτὸς ὁ ποιητὴς,
 καὶ ὃ ἐπιχειρεῖ ἡμῶν τὴν
 διάνοιαν ἄλλοσε τρέπειν
 ὡς ἄλλος τις ὁ λέγων ἢ αὐ-
 τός· τὰ δὲ μετὰ ταῦτα,

Plato de Repub. lib. iii.

† Εἰ δέ γε μηδαμῶς ἐ-
 αὐτὸν ἀποκρύπτει ὁ ποι-
 ητὴς, πᾶσα ἂν αὐτῷ ἄ-
 να μιμήσεως ἢ ποιήσεως τε
 καὶ ἡ διήγησις γεγονῶν εἴη.

Ibid.

present only those things and persons which he would set before their eyes. you see how much the antients excelled us in just and lofty sentiments.

B. I see the use and necessity of painting, in eloquence: let us next know the nature and use of those affecting movements you spoke of.

A. They serve to raise in the hearer's mind, such emotions as answer the orator's purpose.

C. But in what do these movements of an orator consist?

A. In his words, and in the actions of his body.

B. What movement can there be in words?

A. A great deal. Tully tells us, that the very enemies of Gracchus could not forbear weeping when † he pronounced these words — ‘miserable man that I am! whither shall I turn myself? where can I go? to the Capitol? it swims with my brother's blood. shall I go to my own house? there to see my unhappy mother dissolved in tears, and oppressed with sorrow?’ this is moving language. but now if one were to say the same things in a cold manner, they would lose all their force.

B. Think you so?

A. Let us try. ‘I know not where to go, nor whither I should turn myself, amidst my misfortunes. the Capitol is the place where my brother's blood was

† Quid fuit in Graccho, quem tu, Catule, melius meministi, quod me puero tantopere ferretur? quo me miser conferam? quo vertam? in Capitoliumne? at fratris sanguine redundat. an domum? matremne ut miseram lamentantemque videam, et abjectam? quae sic ab illo acta esse

constabat oculis, voce, gestu, inimici ut lachrymas tenere non possent. haec eodico pluribus, quod genus hoc totum oratores, qui sunt veritatis ipsius actores, reliquerunt; imitatores autem veritatis, histriones, occupaverunt. Cic. de Orat. lib. iii. §. 56.

shed: and at home, I shall see my unhappy mother lamenting her condition, with the utmost grief.' this is the same thing that was said before: but what is become of that force and vivacity we then perceived? where is that * vehement manner, and abrupt language which so justly describes nature in the transports of grief? the manner of saying a thing shews us how it affects the mind: and that is what most effectually touches the hearer. in such passages, one ought studiously to avoid all refined uncommon thoughts; and even neglect connection and order: otherwise the passion described has no appearance of truth, or nature, in it. nothing is more shocking than a passion expressed in beautiful figures, pompous language, and well turned periods. on this head, I must recommend † Longinus to you, who quotes many sublime examples from Demosthenes, and others.

C. Besides the movements that attend an affecting vehement stile, you mentioned others that flow from the orators gesture, and action: which I must intreat you to explain.

A. I cannot pretend to give you a compleat System of rhetoric. it is a task I am not fit for. however I shall give you some remarks I have made on the point of gesture. we find in Tully and ‡ Quintilian that the action of the Greeks and Romans was far more violent than ours. they stamp on the ground; and even beat their forehead. Tully mentions an orator who in his pleading laid hold of his client, and tore open his

* See Longinus. §. xviii. † See §. xviii, xix, xx, xxi.

‡ Femur ferire, quod Athenis primus fecisse creditur Cleon, et usitatum est, et indignatos decet, et excitat auditorem. idque in Callidio Cicero desiderat. non frons, inquit, percussa? non femur? pedum nulla supplexio? Quint. lib. xi. c. 3.

cloaths, to shew the judges the wounds he had received in the service of the republic. this was a vehement kind of action indeed; but such as is reserved for extraordinary occasions; and doth not fall within the common rules of gesture. I think it is not natural to be always moving one's arm in talking: that * motion is proper enough when the orator is very vehement: but he ought not to move his arm in order to appear vehement. nay there are many things that ought to be pronounced calmly, and without any motion.

B. Would you have a preacher, for instance, use no gesture at all on some occasions? that would look very strange indeed.

A. I know that most people lay it down for a rule, (or a custom at least,) that a preacher should be always in motion, whatever the subject be that he treats of. but it might be easily shewn that our [French] preachers usually have too much gesture, and sometimes too little.

B. I wish you would state this matter clearly. for, I always believed, from the example of *** that there are not above two or three motions of the hands to be used in a whole sermon.

A. Let us then lay down some principle to argue upon. now of what use is the † action of the body in

* Brachii moderata projectio remissis humeris, atque explicantibus se in proferenda manu digitis, continuos et decurrentes locos maxime decet. *Ibid.*

† Actio inquam in dicendo una dominatur: sine hac summus orator esse in numero

nullo potest: mediocris, hac instructus summos saepe superare. huic primas dedisse Demosthenes dicitur, quum rogaretur quid in dicendo esset primum; huic secundas; huic tertias. *De Orat. lib. iii. §. 56.* est enim actio quasi sermo corporis; quo magis menti

speaking? is it not to express the sentiments and passions of the mind?

B. I think so.

A. The motion of the body then should help to paint the thoughts of the soul.

B. Yes.

A. And that painting ought to be exact and † faithful. Every look and motion should in an easy natural manner represent the speaker's sentiments, and the nature of the things he says; but so as to avoid all mean and theatrical gestures.

B. I think I understand your notion exactly. let me interrupt you then a little; that you may see how far I enter into the consequences that flow from the principle you laid down. you † would have an orator use such a lively, natural, becoming action, as will help to point out distinctly what his words alone could express only in a flat and languid manner. so that you reckon his very action a sort of painting.

A. Right. But we must farther conclude that to congrua esse debet — atque in iis omnibus quae sunt actionis, inest quaedam vis a natura data: quare etiam hac imperiti, hac vulgus, hac denique barbari maxime commoventur — iisdem enim omnium animi motibus concitantur, et eos iisdem notis, et in aliis agnoscunt, et in se ipsi indicant. *Ibid.* §. 54.

† Omnis enim motus animi suum quendam a natura habet vultum et sonum, et gestum: totumque corpus hominis, et ejus omnis vultus omnesque voces, ut nervi in

fidibus, ita sonant, ut a motu animi quoque sint pulsae. *Cicero de Orat. lib. iii. §. 57.*

† Gestus quantum habeat in oratore momenti, satis vel ex eo patet quod pleraque etiam citra verba significat. quippe non manus solum, sed nutus etiam declarant nostram voluntatem; et in mutis pro sermone sunt — contra si gestus ac vultus ab oratione dissentiat, tristitia dicamus hilares, affirmemus aliqua renuentes, non auctoritas modo verbis, sed etiam fides desit.

Quint. lib. xi. c. 3.

paint well, we must imitate nature; and observe what she does when she is left to herself; and is not constrained by art.

B. That is plain.

A. Now doth a man naturally use many gestures when he says common things, without vehemence, or the least mixture of any sort of passion?

B. No.

A. On such common subjects then, we ought not to use any action in public discourses; or at least but little: for there we ought always to * follow nature; nay there are some occasions where an orator might best express his thoughts by silence. for, if, being full of some great sentiment, he continued immoveable for a moment; this surprizing pause would keep the minds of the audience in suspense, and express an emotion too big for words to utter.

B. I doubt not but such unexpected pauses seasonably employed, would be very significant; and powerfully affect the hearers. but, Sir, you seem to think that one who speaks in public ought to use no other action than what is proper for ordinary conversation.

A. You mistake me, Sir: I think the sight of a great assembly, and the importance of the subject an orator treats of, ought to animate him far more than if he were talking familiarly with his friends. but both in private, and in public, he ought always to act natural-

* Unum jam his adjiciendum est, cum praecipue in actione spectetur *decorum*, saepe aliud alios decere. est enim latens quaedam in hoc ratio, et inenarrabilis: et ut vere hoc dictum est, caput esse artis,

decere quod facias— quare norit se quisque; nec tantum ex communibus praeceptis, sed etiam ex natura sua capiat consilium formandae actionis.

Quint. *lib. xi. c. 3.*

ly. he should use some action when his words are moving: but when his expressions are quite calm and simple, there is no occasion to move the body; except it be in the gentlest manner. nothing appears more shocking and absurd, than to see a man very warm and active, when he is saying the driest, coldest things. tho' he sweats himself, he chills the blood of his audience. some time ago, I happened to fall asleep at a sermon; as you know one is apt to do in the afternoon: (and indeed in former times, they preached but once a-day, after the gospel in the morning service:) but I soon waked and found the preacher in a very violent agitation: so that I fancied, at first, that he was pressing some important point of morality——

B. What was the matter then?

A. He was only giving notice that on the Sunday following he would preach upon repentance. I was extremely surpris'd to hear such an indifferent thing uttered with so much vehemence; and must have laugh'd out, if the regard I had for the place, and some other circumstances had not restrain'd me. the pronounciation of these declaimers is exactly like their gesture: for, as their voice is a perpetual monotony; so there is an * uniformity in their gesture that is no

* *In the delivering of sermons, a great compofure of gesture and behaviour is necessary to give them weight and authority. extremes are bad here, as in every thing else. some affect a light and flippan't behaviour: and others think that wry faces, and a tone in the voice will set-off the matter. grave and compos'd looks, and a natural, but distinct pro-*

nunciation, will always have the best effects. the great rule which the masters of rhetoric press much, can never be enough remembered, that to make a man speak well, and pronounce with a right emphasis, he ought thorowly to understand all that he says; be fully perswaded of it; and bring himself to have those affections which he desires to infuse into others.

less nauseous, and unnatural; and equally contrary to the good effect that one might expect from decent action.

B. You said that sometimes they have not action enough.

A. We cannot wonder at that. for they do not discern the things that require warmth and earnestness. they waste their spirits in saying the plainest things; and so are forced to utter those things faintly which ought to be delivered with a vehement action. I must own indeed that the French are not very capable of this vehemence: for, they are too airy, and do not conceive things with sufficient strength: and therefore they do not speak with a proper energy. the Romans had a wonderful talent this way, and the Greeks a greater. the eastern nations excelled in it; and particularly the Hebrews. nothing can equal the strength and vivacity of the figures they employed in their discourse; and the very actions they used to express their sentiments; such as putting ashes on their heads, and tearing their garments, and covering themselves with sack-cloath, under any deep distress and sorrow of mind. I do not speak of what the prophets did to give a more lively representation of the things they foretold; because such figurative actions were the effect of divine inspiration. but even in other cases, we find that those people understood much better

<i>he that is perswaded of the truth of what he says, and has a concern about it in his mind, will pronounce with a natural vehemence that is far more lively than all the strains that art can lead him to. an orator, (if we hearken to</i>	<i>them) must be an honest man, and speak always on the side of truth; and study to feel all that he says; and then he will speak it so as to make others feel it likewise.</i> Discourse of the pastoral care. ch. ix.
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than we do, how to express their grief, and fear, and other passions. and hence, no doubt, arose those surprising effects of eloquence, which we never experience now.

B. You approve then of many different gestures, and † various inflections of the voice?

A. It is that variety which gives so much grace, and force to the action of an orator; and made Demosthenes far excel all others. the more easy and familiar that the voice and action appear, when the speaker only narrates, explains, or instructs; the more apt he will be to surprise and move the audience in those parts of his discourse, where he grows suddenly vehement, and enforces lofty affecting sentiments by a suitable energy of voice, and action. this due ‡ pro-

† In omni voce, est quidam medium; sed suum cuique: hinc gradatim adscendere vocem utile, et suave est: (nam a principio clamare agreste quiddam est:) et illud idem ad formandum est vocem salutare: deinde est quiddam contentius extremum — est item contra quiddam in remissione gravissimum, quoque tamquam sonorum gradibus descenditur. haec varietas, et hic per omnes sonos vocis cursus, et se tuebitur, et actioni afferet suavitatem. Cic. de Orat. lib. iii. §. 61.

‡ Ornata est pronuntiatio, cui suffragatur vox facilis, magna, beata, flexibilis, firma, dulcis, durabilis, clara, pura, secans aëra, auribus sedens. est enim quaedam ad

auditum accommodata, non magnitudine sed proprietate, ad hoc velut tractabilis; utique habens omnes in se qui desiderantur sonos *intentionesque*, et toto ut aiunt organo instructa — illud vero maximum, quod secundum *rationem rerum* de quibus dicimus, animorumque habitus, *conformanda vox* est, ne ab oratione discordet. vitemus igitur illam quae Graece *μωρονομία* vocatur, una quaedam spiritus ac soni intentio: non solum ne dicamus clamose, quod insanum est; aut intra loquendi modum, quod motu caret; aut summisso murmure, quo etiam debilitatur omnis intentio: sed ut in iisdem partibus, iisdemque affectibus, sint tamen quaedam non ita magnae vo-

nunciation is a kind of music; whose beauty consists in the variety of proper tones, and inflexions of the voice, which ought to rise or fall with a just and easy cadence, according to the nature of the things we express. It gives a light as well as a grace to language; and is the very life and spirit of discourse.

B. According to your notions of elocution, it is an art unknown to our greatest orators. the preacher that you and I heard, about a fortnight ago, did not observe your rule: nor even seem to endeavour it. except the first thirty words of his sermon, he spake always in the same tone: and the only sign I could perceive of his being more vehement in some parts of his discourse, than in others, was, that when he seemed earnest, he spoke faster than at other times.

A. To me, Sir, his voice seemed to have two tones; tho' they were not well adapted to his words. you observed justly enough that he did not follow the rules of pronunciation: and I believe he did not perceive the need of them. his voice is naturally melodious: and tho' it be ill managed, it is however pleasing enough. but you see plainly that it does not make those strong affecting impressions on the mind that it would produce, if it had such various inflections as are proper to express the speaker's sentiments. such preachers are like fine clocks, that give a clear, full, soft, agreeable sound; but after all they are clocks only, of no significancy: and having no variety of notes, they are incapable of harmony, or eloquence.

cis declinationes, prout aut verborum dignitas, aut sententiarum natura, aut depositio, aut inceptio, aut transitus postulat: ut qui singulis

pinxerunt coloribus, alia tamen eminentiora, alia reductiora fecerunt; sine quo ne membris quidem suas lineas dedissent. Quint. lib. xi. c. 3.

B. But were there not many graces in the rapidity of his discourse?

A. Yes: and I grant that in some affecting, lively passages one ought to speak faster than usual. but 'tis a great fault to speak with so much precipitation that one cannot stop himself, nor be distinctly understood. the voice and action bear some resemblance to verse. sometimes we must use such a slow, and grave measure as is fit to describe things of that character: and sometimes a short impetuous one, to express what is quick and ardent. to use always the same degree of action, and the same tone of voice, is like prescribing one remedy for all distempers. but we ought to excuse the uniformity of that preacher's voice, and action. for, besides his possessing many excellent qualities, the fault we complain of, is the natural effect of his stile. we have already agreed that the modulation of the voice should be exactly suited to the words. now his stile is even, and uniform, without the least variety. on the one hand, it is not familiar, insinuating and popular: and on the other, it has nothing in it that is lively, figurative, and sublime: but it consists of a constant flow of words, that press one after the other; containing a close and well-connected chain of reasoning, on clear ideas. In a word, he is a man that talks good sense very correctly. nay we must acknowledge that he has done great service to the pulpit: he has rescued it from the servitude of vain declaimers; and filled it himself with much strength and dignity. he is very capable of convincing people: but I know few preachers who persuade and move them less than he doth. if you observe carefully, you will even find that his way of preaching is not very instructive. for, be-

sides his not having a familiar, engaging, pathetic manner of talking, (as I observed before;) his discourse does not in the least * strike the imagination, but is addressed to the understanding only. it is a thread of reasoning that cannot be comprehended without the closest attention. and seeing there are but few hearers capable of such a constant application of mind, they retain little or nothing of his discourse. It is like a torrent that hurries along at once, and leaves its channel dry. in order to make a lasting impresson on people's minds, we must support their attention, by moving their passions: for, dry instructions can have but little influence. but the thing that I reckon least natural in this preacher, is the continual motion he gives his arms; while there is nothing figurative, nor moving in his words. the action used in ordinary conversation, would suit his stile best: or his impetuous gesture would require a stile full of fallies and vehemence: and even then he behoved to manage his warmth better, and render it less uniform. in fine, I

* *The senses and the imagination are fruitful and inexhaustible sources of mistakes and delusion: but the understanding or mind acting by itself, is not so subject to error—we cannot always speak so as to affect the senses and imagination of others: nor ought we always to endeavour it. when a subject is abstracted, we can seldom render it sensible [or apt to strike the imagination,] without making it obscure: it is enough if it be made intelligible. nothing can be more unjust than the usual complaints of those who would*

know every thing; and yet will not apply themselves to any thing. they take it amiss when we require their attention; and expect that we should always strike their fancy, and continually please their senses, and their passions. but it is not in our power to gratify them. the authors of romances and comedies, are obliged thus to please and amuse them: but as for us, it is enough if we can instruct those who are truly attentive.

P. Malbranche's recherche de la verité. liv. iii. c. 1.

think he is a great man; but not an orator. a country preacher who can alarm his hearers, and draw tears from them, answers the end of eloquence better than he.

B. But how shall we know the particular gestures, and the inflexions of voice that are agreeable to nature?

A. I told you before that the whole art of good orators consists in observing what nature does when unconstrained. you ought not to imitate those haranguers who chuse always to declaim; but will never talk to their hearers. on the contrary, you should address yourself to an audience in such a modest, respectful, engaging manner, that each of them shall think you are speaking to him in particular. and this is the use and advantage of natural, familiar, insinuating tones of voice. they ought always to be grave and becoming: and even strong and pathetic, when the subject requires it. but you must not fancy that you can express the passions by the mere strength of voice: like those noisy speakers who by bawling and tossing themselves about, stun their hearers, instead of affecting them. if we would succeed in painting, and raising the passions; we must know exactly what movements they inspire. for instance, observe what is the posture, and what the voice of one, whose heart is pierced with sorrow, or surprized at the sight of an astonishing object: remark the natural action of the eyes; what the hands do; and what the whole body. on such occasions nature appears; and you need only follow it: if you must employ * art, conceal it so well under an ex-

* Τότε γὰρ ἡ τέχνη | τέλειος, ἡνίκ' ἂν φύσις εἰ-

act imitation, that it may pass for nature itself. but to speak the truth, orators in such cases, are like poets who write elegies or other passionate verses; they must † feel the passion they describe, else they can never paint it well. the greatest art imaginable can never speak like ‡ true passion, and undisguised nature. so that you will always be but an imperfect orator, if you be not thorowly moved with those sentiments that you paint, and would infuse into others. nor do I say this from a pious motive: I speak now only as * an orator.

B. The case, I think, is abundantly plain: but you spoke to us of the eyes: have they their rhetoric too?

να δοκῇ ἡ δ' αὖ φύσις ἐ- | σα περιέχει τὴν τέχνην.
 ωιτυχῆς, ὅταν λανθάνῃ- | Longinus. §. xxii.

† Ut ridentibus arrident, ita flentibus adsunt
 Humani vultus. si vis me flere, dolendum est
 Primum ipsi tibi —————
 ——— male si mandata loqueris,
 Aut dormitabo, aut ridebo. tristitia moestum
 Vultum verba decent: iratum plena minarum.
 Format enim natura prius nos intus ad omnem
 Fortunarum habitum; juvat, aut impellit ad iram.
 Aut ad humum mocrare gravi deducit, et angit:
 Post effert animi motus interprete lingua.

Hor. de A. P.

‡ Θάρρῶν γὰρ ἀφορισά-
 μην ἂν ὡς ἔδεν ἔτως ὡς τὸ
 θυνᾶμον πάθος ἐνθα χρὴ
 μεγάληγορον, ὥσπερ ὑπὸ
 μανίας τινός, καὶ πνεύμα-
 τος ἐνθουσιαστικῆς ἐκπνέον, καὶ
 οἰονεὶ φοιβάζον τὰς λόγους.
 Longinus. § viii.

* Neque fieri potest, ut doceat is qui audit, ut oderit, ut invidet, ut pertimescat aliquid, nisi omnes ii motus quos orator adhibere volet iudici, in ipso oratore impressi, atque iniusti videbuntur — ut enim nulla materies tam facilis ad exardescendum est, quae nisi admoto igni ignem concipere possit: sic nulla mens est tam ad comprehendendam

A. Yes; if you will believe †† Tully, and other antient orators. nothing is more intelligible than the aspect: it expresses every passion of the soul. and in the aspect, the eyes are most active and significant. one well-timed look will pierce to the bottom of the heart.

B. The preacher we were speaking of, has usually his eyes shut. when we observe him near, it is very shocking.

A. It is disagreeable because we perceive that he wants one of the chief things that ought to enliven his discourse.

B. But why does he so?

A. He makes haste to pronounce his words; and shuts his eyes, because it helps his labouring memory.

B. I observed indeed that it was very much burdened: sometimes he repeated several words to find out the thread of his discourse. such repetitions make one look like a careless school-boy that has forgot his lesson. they are very disagreeable; and would not be easily excused in a preacher of less note.

A. It is not so much the preacher's fault as the defect of the method he follows, after many others. so

vim oratoris parata, quae possit incendi, nisi inflammatus ipse ad eam, et ardens accerseris.

Cic. de Orat lib. ii. §. 45.

†† Sed in ore sunt omnia. in eo autem ipso dominatus est omnis oculorum — animi enim est omnis actio; et imago animi vultus est, indices oculi. nam haec est una pars corporis quae quot animi motus sunt, tot significationes, et

commutationes possit efficere — oculi sunt quorum tum intentione, tum remissione, tum conjectu, tum hilaritate motus animorum significemus aperte cum genere ipso orationis: est enim actio quasi sermo corporis; quo magis menti congruens esse debet. — quare in hac nostra actione secundum vocem vultus valet: is autem oculis gubernatur.

Cic. de Orat. lib. iii. §. 59.

long as men preach by heart, and often, they will be apt to fall into this perplexity.

B. How do you mean? would you have us not preach by heart? without doing so, one could not make an exact pithy discourse.

A. I am not against a preacher's getting some particular sermons by heart. they may always have time enough to prepare themselves for extraordinary occasions. and they might even acquit themselves handsomely without such great preparation.

B. How? this seems incredible.

A. If I be mistaken, I shall readily own it. let us only examine the point without prepossession. what is the chiefaim of an orator? is it not to perswade? and in order to this, ought he not to affect his hearers, by moving their passions?

B. I grant it.

A. The most lively and moving way of preaching is therefore the best.

B. True: what do you conclude from that?

A. Which of two orators will have the most powerful and affecting manner; he who learns his discourse by heart; or he who speaks without reciting word for word what he had studied?

B. He, I think, who has got his discourse by heart.

A. Have patience: and let us state the question right. on the one hand, I suppose a man prepares his discourse exactly, and learns it by heart to the least syllable. on the other hand, I suppose another person who fills his mind with the subject he is to talk of; who speaks with great ease; (for, you would not have any body * attempt to speak in public, without hav-

* ——— Ego nec studium sine divite vena,
Nec rude quid prosit video ingenium—— Hor. de A. P.

ing proper talents for it:) in short, a man who has attentively considered all the principles, and parts of the subject he is to handle; and has a comprehensive view of them in all their extent; who has reduced his thoughts into a proper method; and prepared the strongest expressions to explain and inforce them in a sensible manner; who ranges all his arguments, and has a sufficient number of affecting figures: such a man certainly knows every thing that he ought to say; and the order in which the whole should be placed: † to succeed therefore in his delivery, he wants nothing but those common expressions that must make the bulk of his discourse. but do you believe now that such a person would have any difficulty in finding easy familiar expressions?

B. He could not find such just and handsome ones as he might have hit on, if he had sought them leisurely in his closet.

† *He then that would prepare himself to be a preacher in this method, must accustom himself to talk freely to himself, to let his thoughts flow from him; especially when he feels an edge and heat upon his mind: for then happy expressions will come in his mouth — he must also be writing essays upon all sorts of subjects; for by writing he will bring himself to a correctness both in thinking and in speaking: and thus by a hard practice for two or three years, a man may render himself such a master in this way, that he can never be surprized; nor will new thoughts ever dry up upon him. he must talk over to him-*

self the whole body of divinity; and accustom himself to explain, and prove; to clear objections; and to apply every part of it to some practical use — and if in these his meditations, happy thoughts, and noble tender expressions, do at any time offer themselves, he must not lose them; but write them down — by a very few years practice of two or three of such soliloquies a-day, chiefly in the morning when the head is clearest, and the spirits are liveliest, a man will contract a great easiness both in thinking, and speaking.

Bp. Burnet's disc. on the pastoral care. p. 210, 211.

I own that. but according to you, he would lose only a few ornaments: and you know how to rate that loss according to the principles we laid down before. on the other side, what advantage must he not have in the freedom and force of his action: which is the main thing. supposing that he has applyed himself much to composing, (as † Cicero requires of an orator,) that he has read all the best models; and has a natural or acquired easiness of stile and speech; that he has abundance of solid knowledge and learning; that he understands his subject perfectly well; and has ranged all the parts and proofs of it in his head: in such a case we must conclude that he will speak with force, and † order, and readiness. his periods perhaps will not sooth the ear so much as the others; and for that reason he must be the better orator. his transitions may not be so fine: it is no great matter: tho' these he might have prepared without getting them by heart: besides, these little omissions were common to the most eloquent orators among the ancients. they thought such negligence was very natural; and ought even to be imitated, to avoid the appearance of too great preparation. what then could our orator want? he might make some little repetition: but that

‡ Caput autem est, quod (ut vere dicam) minime facimus, (est enim magni laboris, quem plerique fugimus) quam plurimum scribere — stilus affidua ac diligens scriptura optimus, et praestantissimus superabit. *De Orat. lib. i.* dicendi effector, ac magister; §. 33.

† ——— cui lecta potenter erit res,

Nec facundia deserit hunc, nec lucidus ordo.

Verbaque provisam rem non invita sequentur.

HOR, *de A. P.*

too must have its use. not only will the judicious hearer take a pleasure in observing nature here, which leads one often to resume whatever view of the subject strikes strongest upon the mind: but likewise this repetition imprints the truth more deeply; which is the best manner of instruction. at the worst, one might find in his discourse some inaccuracy of construction, some obsolete word that has been censured by the academy; something that is irregular; or, if you will, some weak or misapplied expression that he may happen to drop in the warmth of action. but surely they must have narrow souls who can think such little escapes worth any one's notice. there is abundance of these to be met with in the most * excellent originals. the greatest orators among the antients neglected them: and if our views were as noble as theirs, we should not so much regard those † trifles, which can amuse none but such as are not able to discern and pursue

* Παρατεδεδεμένος δ' ἐκ ὀλίγα καὶ αὐτὸς ἀμαρτήματα, καὶ Ομήρου, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ὅσοι μέγιστοι, καὶ ἤκιστα τοῖς πλάσμασιν ἀρεχόμηνος, ὅμως δὲ ἔχ' ἀμαρτήματα μᾶλλον αὐτὰ	ἐκείτια καλῶν, ἢ παροράματα δι' ἀμέλειαν, εἰκὴν περ καὶ ὡς ἔτυχεν ὑπὸ μεγαλοφυΐας ἀνεπιστάτως παρενηγεγμένα·
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Longinus. §. xxxiii.

† Sunt delicta tamen, quibus ignovisse velimus:
 Nam neque chorda sonum reddit quem vult manus et mens;
 Poscentique gravem persaepe remittit acutum:
 Nec semper feriet quodcunque minabitur arcus.
 Verum ubi plura nitent in carmine, non ego paucis
 Offendar maculis, quas aut incuria fudit,
 Aut humana parum cavit natura——

Hor. de A. P.

what is truly great. excuse my freedom, Sir: if I did not think you had a genius very different from these little, cavilling critics I condemn, I should speak of them with greater caution.

B. You may always speak your mind, Sir, without any reserve on my account. be pleased therefore to go on with your comparison.

A. Consider then, in the next place, the advantages that a preacher must have who does not get his sermon by heart. he is intirely master of himself: he speaks in an easy unaffected way; and not like a formal declaimer. things flow then from their proper source. if he has a natural talent for eloquence, his language must be lively and moving: even the † warmth that animates him, must lead him to such pertinent expressions, and figures, as he could not have found out by study.

† *But the rule I have observed last, is the most necessary of that can be said, when they carry all: and without it all the rest visible characters of genuineness in will never do the business: it is them. now if a man can carry this: that a man must have in on this method, and by much me-himself a deep sense of the truth ditation and prayer, draw down and power of religion: he must divine influences, which are al-have a life and flame in his thoughts ways to be expected when a man with relation to these subjects: puts himself in the way of them, he must have felt himself those and prepares himself for them; he things which he intends to explain will always feel that while he is and recommend to others. he must musing, a fire is kindled with-observe narrowly the motions of in him; and then he will speak his own mind;—that so he may with authority, and without con-have a lively heat in himself when straint: his thoughts will be true, he speaks of them; and that he and his expressions free and easy. may speak in so sensible a manner, Discourse of the pastoral that it may be almost felt that he care. p. 111, 112. speaks from his heart, there is an*

B. Why? surely a man may enliven his fancy, and compose very sprightly discourses in his closet.

A. I own that: but a just elocution and gesture must still give them a greater life, and spirit. besides, what one says in the ardour of action is far more natural and affecting: it has a negligent air; and discovers none of that art which is visible in all elaborate composures. we may add farther, that a skilful experienced orator † adapts things to the capacity of his hearers; and varies his discourse according to the impression he sees it makes upon their minds. for, he easily perceives whether they understand him, or not; and whether he gains their attention, and moves their hearts: and if it be needful, he resumes the same things in a different manner, and sets them in another light: he cloaths them in more familiar images, and comparisons: or he goes back to the plainest principles, from which he gradually deduces the truths he would enforce: or he endeavours to cure those passions, that hinder the truth from making a due impression. this is the true art of instruction and perswasion: and without this address and presence of mind, we can only make roving and fruitless declamations. observe now how far the orator who gets every thing by heart, falls short of the other's success. if we suppose then a man to preach who depends intirely on his memory, and dares not pronounce a word different from his lesson; his stile will be very exact: but, as Dionysius

† Erit igitur hæc facultas in eo quem volumus esse eloquentem, ut definire rem possit; neque id faciat tam presse et anguste, quam in illis eruditissimis disputationibus fieri

solet, sed cum explanatius, tum etiam uberius, et ad commune iudicium, *popularemque intelligentiam* accommodatius — Cic. *Orat.* §. 33.

Halicarnasseus observes of Isocrates, his composition must please more when it is read, than when it is pronounced. besides, let him take what pains he will, the inflexions of his voice will be too uniform; and always a little constrained. he is not like a man that speaks to an audience; but like a rhetorician who recites or declaims. his action must be awkward and forced: by fixing his eyes too much, he shews how much his memory labours in his delivery: and he is afraid to give way to an unusual emotion, lest he should lose the thread of his discourse. now the hearer perceiving such an undisguised art, is so far from being touched, and captivated, as he ought to be, that he observes the speaker's artifice with coldness and neglect.

B. But did not the antient orators do what you condemn?

A. I believe not.

B. What! do you think that Demosthenes and Tully did not learn by heart those finished orations they have left us?

A. We know very well that they composed and wrote their harangues, before they spake in public: but we have several reasons to believe that they did not get them by heart, word for word. even the orations of Demosthenes, as we have them, shew rather the sublimity and vehemence of a great genius that was accustomed to speak powerfully of public affairs; than the accuracy and politeness of an author. as for Cicero, in several places of his harangues, we find things spoken on sudden emergencies, that he could not possibly have foreseen. and if we take his † opinion of

† Sed verborum memoria, | majore imaginum varietate
quae minus est nobis necessaria, | distinguitur: multa enim sunt

this matter; he thinks an orator ought to have a great memory: and he even speaks of an artificial kind of memory as an useful invention: but all he says on this point does not imply that we ought to learn every word by heart. on the contrary, he seems only to require, that we should range all the parts of a discourse exactly in our memory, and prepare the figures and chief expressions we are to use; so as to be ready to add off-hand whatever may occasionally be suggested from a view of the audience, or unexpected accidents. and it is for this reason, that he requires so much application and presence of mind in an orator.

B. You must allow me to tell you, Sir, that all this does not convince me: for I cannot believe that one can speak so very well, without having prepared and adjusted all his expressions.

C. The reason why it is so hard to persuade you in this case, is, because you judge of the matter by common experience. if they who get their sermons by heart, were to preach without that preparation, it is likely they would succeed but very ill: nor am I surprised at it: for, they are not accustomed to follow nature: they have studied only to compose their sermons; and that too with affectation. they have never once thought of † speaking in a noble, strong, and na-

verba, quae quasi articuli connectunt *membra* orationis, quae formari similitudine nulla possunt: *eorum* fingendae nobis sunt *imagines*, quibus semper utamur. rerum memoria, *propria* est oratoris: eam singulis personis bene positus notare possumus, ut *sententias* imagini-

bus, *ordinem* locis comprehendamus.

De Orat. lib. ii. §. 88.

† This leads me to consider the difference that is between the reading, and the speaking of sermons. reading is peculiar to this nation; and is endured in no other. it has indeed made our scr-

tural manner. indeed the greatest part of preachers have not a sufficient fund of solid knowledge to depend on, and are therefore afraid to trust themselves without the usual preparation. the method of getting sermons by heart qualifies many, who have but very scanty and superficial parts, to make a tolerable figure in the pulpit; seeing they need only lay together a certain number of passages, and remarks: and however little genius or assistance a man has, he may with time and application be able to work up and polish his matter into some form. but to preach with judgment and strength requires an attentive meditation upon the first principles of religion; an exact knowledge of morality; an insight into antiquity; strength of reasoning; and sutable action. is not this, Sir, what you require in an orator who does not learn his discourse by heart?

mons more exact; and so has produced to us many volumes of the best that are extant. but after all, tho' some few read so happily, pronounce so truly, and enter so entirely into those affections which they recommend; that in them, we see both the correctness of reading, and the seriousness of speaking sermons; yet every one is not so happy. some by hanging their head perpetually over their notes, by blundering as they read; and by a cursory running over them, do so lessen the matter of their sermons, that as they are generally read with very little life or affection, so they are heard with as little regard, or esteem. those who read, ought certainly to be at a little more pains, than (for the

most part) they are to read true; to pronounce with an emphasis; to raise their head, and to direct their eyes to their hearers: and if they practised more, alone, the just way of reading, they might deliver their sermons with much more advantage. man is a low sort of creature: he does not (nay the greater part cannot,) consider things in themselves, without those little seasonings that must recommend them to their affections — besides, the people (who are too apt to censure the clergy) are easily carried into an obvious reflection on reading, that it is an effect of laziness.

Discourse of the pastoral care. ch. ix.

A. You have explained my thoughts exactly. only it may not be improper to add, that tho' a man should not possess all these qualities in a remarkable degree, he may yet preach very well, if he has a solid judgment, a tolerable stock of knowledge, and an easy way of speaking. for, in this method, as in the other, there may be different degrees of eloquence. you may further observe that most of those who preach without getting their sermons by heart, do not prepare themselves enough. they ought to study their subject with the closest attention; prepare all those moving passages that should affect the audience; and give the several parts of their discourse such an order as will best serve to set the whole in the most proper light.

B. You have oftentimes spoken of this order: do you mean any thing else by it than a division of the subject? perhaps you have some peculiar notion on this point too.

A. You think that you rally me: but in good earnest, I am as singular in my opinion upon this head, as on any other.

B. I easily believe you.

A. It is certainly so: and since we have fallen upon this subject, I will shew you how far I think the greater part of orators are defective in the point of order.

B. Since you are so fond of order, I hope you do not dislike divisions.

A. I am far from approving them.

B. Why? do they not methodize a discourse?

A. For the most part, divisions give only a seeming order; while they really mangle and clog a discourse,

by separating it into two or three parts; which must interrupt the orator's action, and the effect it ought to produce. there remains no true ‡ unity after such divisions; seeing they make two or three different discourses, which are joined into one, only by an arbitrary connection. for three sermons preached at different times, (if they be formed upon some regular concerted plan, as the sermons in Advent usually are,) make one piece, or intire discourse, as much, as the three points of any of these sermons make one whole by being joined, and delivered, together.

B. What is it then that you mean by order? how confused must a discourse be that is not divided?

A. Do you think there is more confusion in the orations of Demosthenes, and Tully, than in the sermons of your parish-preacher?

B. I do not know — I believe not.

A. You need not be afraid of giving your judgment too freely. the harangues of these great men are not divided as our sermons are. nay Isocrates (of whom we spake so much before,) and other antient orators, did not follow our method of dividing. the fathers of the church knew nothing of it. even S. Bernard, the last of them, only gives a hint of some divisions, and does not pursue them; nor divide his discourses in form. and for a long time after him, sermons were not divided: it is a modern invention which we owe originally to the scholastic divines.

‡ *A text being opened, then the point upon which the sermon is to run is to be opened: and it will be the better heard, and understood if there be but one point* | *in a sermon: so that one head, and only one, is well stated, and fully set out.*

Discourse of the pastoral care. p. 249.

B. I grant that the school-men are a very bad model for eloquence: but what form did the antients use to give their discourses?

A. They did not divide them; but they pointed out carefully all those things that ought to be distinguished: to each of them † they assigned its proper place; after having attentively considered where it might be introduced to the best advantage, and be fittest to make a due impression. oftentimes that which would seem nothing to the purpose, by being unseasonably urged, has a very great weight when it is reserved for its proper place; till the audience be prepared by other things to feel all its force and consequence. nay a single word when happily applyed, will set the truth in the strongest light. Cicero tells us that we ought sometimes to delay giving a full view of the truth, till the very conclusion. But then, throughout our discourse there ought to run such a concatenation of proofs, as that the first may make way for the second: and the next always serve to support the former. we ought at first to give a general view of our subject, and endeavour to gain the favour of the audience by a ‡

† Ordinis haec virtus erit, et venus, aut ego fallor,
Ut jam nunc dicat, jam nunc debentia dici
Pleraque differat, et praesens in tempus omittat—
Infelix operis summa, quia ponere totum
Nesciet—

HOR. de A. P.

‡ Sed haec adjuvant in oratore, lenitas vocis, vultus, pudoris significatio, verborum comitas: si quid persequare acrius, ut invitus, et coactus facere videare. facilitatis, liberalitatis, mansuetudinis, pi-

etatis, grati animi, non appetentis, non avidi signa proferri perutile est—tantum autem efficitur sensu quodam ac ratione dicendi, ut quasi mores oratoris effingat oratio.

Cic. de Orat. lib. ii. §. 43.

modest introduction, a respectful address, and the genuine marks of candour and probity. then we should establish those principles on which we design to argue; and in a clear, easy, sensible manner propose the principal facts we are to build on; insisting chiefly on those circumstances, of which we intend to make use afterwards. from these principles and facts we must draw just consequences; and argue in such a clear and well-connected manner, that all our proofs may support each other; and so be the more remembered. every step we advance, our discourse ought to grow stronger; so that the hearers may gradually perceive the force and evidence of the truth: and then we ought to display it in such lively images and movements as are proper to excite the passions. in order to this we must know their various springs, and the mutual dependence they have one upon another; which of them we can most easily move, and employ to raise the rest; and which of them in fine, is able to produce the greatest effects; and must therefore be applied to, in the conclusion of our discourse. it is oftentimes proper, at the close, to make a short recapitulation, in which the orator ought to exert all his force and skill in giving the audience a full, clear, concise view of the chief topics he has enlarged on. in short, one is not obliged always to follow this method without any variation. there are exceptions, and allowances, to be made, for different subjects and occasions. and even in this order I have proposed, one may find an endless variety. but now you may easily see that this method (which is chiefly taken from Tully,) cannot be observed in a discourse that is divided into three parts, nor can it be followed in each particular division. we ought

therefore to chuse some method, Sir, but such a method as is not discovered, and promised, in the beginning of our discourse. Cicero tells us that the best method is generally to conceal the order we follow, till we lead the hearer to it without his being aware of it before. I remember he says, in express terms, that we ought to conceal even the number of our arguments; so that one shall not be able to count them, tho' they be very distinct in themselves: and that we ought not plainly to point out the division of a discourse. but such is the undistinguishing taste of these latter ages, that an audience cannot perceive any order, unless the speaker distinctly explain it in the beginning; and even intimate to them his gradual advances from the first to the second, and following general heads, or subdivisions, of his discourse.

C. But do not divisions help to support the attention, and ease the memory of the hearers? it is for their better instruction that the speaker divides his discourse.

A. A division chiefly relieves the speaker's memory. and even this effect might be much better obtained by his following a natural order without any express division: for, the true connection of things best directs the mind. our common divisions are of use to those only who have studied, and been trained up to this method in the schools. and if the common people retain the division better than the rest of the sermon; it is only because they hear it often repeated: but generally speaking they best remember practical points, and such things as strike their senses and imagination.

B. The order you propose may be proper enough

for some subjects: but it cannot be fit for all: for, we have not always facts to lay down.

A. When we have none, we must do without them: but there are very few subjects into which they might not be aptly introduced. one of Plato's chief beauties is, that in the beginning of his moral pieces he usually gives us some fragment of history, or some tradition that serves as the foundation of his discourse. this method would far more become those who preach religion; which is entirely founded upon tradition, history, and the most antient records. indeed most preachers argue but weakly; and do not instruct people sufficiently, because they do not trace back things to these sources.

B. We have already given you too much trouble, Sir, and I am almost ashamed to detain you longer: but I wish heartily you would allow me to ask you a few more questions concerning the rules of public discourse.

A. With all my heart: I am not yet weary: you may dispose, as you please, of the little time I have left.

B. Well then, you would have all false and trifling ornaments entirely banished from discourse. now, tho' you touched upon this point before, pray shew me by some sensible examples how to * distinguish such

* *False eloquence, like the prismatic glass,
It's gaudy colours spreads on ev'ry place;
The face of nature we no more survey,
All glares alike, without distinction gay.
But true expression, like th' unchanging sun,
Clears and improves whate'er it shines upon,
It gilds all objects, but it alters none.*

false beauties from those that are solid and natural.

A. Do you love quavering notes in music? are you not better pleased with those brisk significant notes that describe things, and express the passions.

B. Yes, certainly: for, quavers are of no use: they only amuse the ear, and do not affect the mind. our music was once full of them; and was therefore very weak and confused: but now we begin to refine our taste, and to come nearer the music of the antients; which is a kind of passionate declamation, that acts powerfully upon the soul.

A. I knew that music, of which you are so good a judge, would serve to make you understand what concerns eloquence. there ought to be a kind of eloquence in music itself: and in both these arts we ought to reject all false and trilling beauties. do you not perceive now that by a trilling discourse I mean the humming jingle of languid uniform periods; a chiming of words that returns perpetually, like the burden of a song? this is the false eloquence that resembles bad music.

B. I wish, Sir, you could make it a little plainer still.

A. The reading of good and bad orators will more effectually form your taste, on this point, than all the rules in the world. however it were easy to satisfy you by some pertinent examples. I will not mention any modern ones; tho' we abound in false ornaments. that I may not offend any person, let us return to Isocrates who is the standard of those nice and florid

*Expression is the dress of thought, and still
Appears more decent, as more suitable.*

Mr. Pope's essay on criticism.

harangues that are now in vogue. did you ever read his famous panegyric on Helen?

B. Yes: I have read it some time ago.

A. How did you like it?

B. Extremely well. I thought I never saw so much wit, elegance, sweetness, invention, and delicacy in any composition. I own to you that Homer himself (whom I read afterwards,) did not seem to have so much spirit as he. but now that you have shown me what ought to be the true aim of poets and orators, I see plainly that Homer, who concealed his art, vastly surpasses Isocrates who took so much pains to display his skill. but I was once charmed with that orator, and should have been so still, if you had not undeceived me. Mr. — is the Isocrates of our days: and I perceive that by shewing the defects of that antient orator, you condemn all those who imitate his florid effeminate rhetoric.

A. I am now speaking of Isocrates only — in the beginning of his encomium he magnifies the love that Theseus had for Helen, and fancied that he should give a lofty idea of her, by describing the heroic qualities of that great man who fell in love with her: as if Theseus (whom the antients always represent as weak and inconstant in his amours,) could not have been smitten with a woman of a moderate beauty. then he comes to the judgment that Paris formed of her. he says that a dispute having arisen among the goddesses concerning their beauty; they agreed to make Paris judge of it: upon which occasion Juno proffered him the empire of Asia: Minerva assured him of constant victory in battles: and Venus tempted him with the beautiful Helen. now seeing Paris, when he

was to determine this matter, could not behold the faces of those goddesses, because of their dazzling splendour, he could only judge of the worth of the three things that they offered: and upon the comparison he preferred Helen to empire, and to victory. then the orator praises the judgment of Paris, in whose determination the goddesses themselves acquiesced; and adds these remarkable words: * ‘I wonder that any one should think Paris indiscreet in chusing to live with her, for whom many demi-gods would have been willing to die.’

C. This puts me in mind of our preachers who are so full of antitheses and turns of wit. there are a great many such orators as Isocrates.

A. He is their master! all the rest of his panegyric is of the ‡ same strain. it is founded on the long war of Troy; the calamities that the Greeks suffered for the rape of Helen, and the praise of beauty which has so much power over men. there is nothing in the whole discourse solidly proved; nor the least point of moral instruction. he judges of the worth of things only according to mens extravagant passions. and as his proofs are weak: so his stile is flourished and fini-

* Θαυμάζω δ' εἴ τις ἐκ ἂν εἴη ἀνόητος εἰ τὰς οἶεται κακῶς βεβηλευῖσθαι θεὰς εἰδῶς περὶ κάλλους τὸν μετὰ ταύτης ζῆν ἐλόφρονος, ἥς ἕνεκα πολλοὶ τῶν ἡμιθέων ἀποθνήσκουσιν ἢ θέλησαν. Isocr. Hel. Laud.

‡ His very next words are these, — Πῶς δ' ἰδύσας; — Ibid.

cal. I quoted this passage, profane as it is, because it is a very famous one ; and because this affected manner is very much in fashion. the more grave discourses of Isocrates are composed in the same spruce effeminate way ; and are full of such false beauties as that I now mentioned.

C. I find you like none of those witty turns which have nothing in them that is either solid, natural, or affecting ; and tend neither to convince, nor paint, nor persuade. the example you have brought from Isocrates, tho' it be upon a trifling subject, is yet very pertinent : for, all such tinsel-wit must appear still more ridiculous when it is applyed to grave and serious matters.

A. But, Sir, as to Isocrates, do not you think I had reason to censure him as freely as Tully assures us Aristotle did.

B. What says Tully?

A. † That Aristotle perceiving Isocrates had perverted eloquence from its proper use to amusement and ostentation ; and thereby drawn to himself the most considerable disciples, he applyed to him a verse of Philoctetes, to shew how much he was ashamed of being silent while that vain declaimer carryed all before him. but I have done now: it is time for me to be going.

B. We cannot part with you so soon, Sir: will you then allow of no antitheses?

A. Yes: when the things we speak of are naturally opposite one to another, it may be proper enough to shew their opposition. Such antitheses are just, and have a solid beauty, and a right application of them

† Lib. 3. §. 35.

is often the most easy and concise manner of explaining things. but it is extremely childish to use artificial turns and windings to make words clash and play one against another. at first, this may happen to dazzle those who have no taste: but they soon grow weary of such a silly affectation. did you ever observe the Gothic architecture of our old churches?

B. Yes; it is very common.

A. Did you take notice of the roses, holes, unconnected ornaments, and disjointed little knacks that these Gothic buildings are full of. these odd conceits are just such beauties in architecture as forced antitheses and quibbles are in eloquence. the Grecian architecture is far more simple, and admits of none but natural, solid and majestic ornaments: we see nothing in it but what is great, proportioned, and well placed. but the Gothic kind was invented by the Arabians; who being a people of a quick sprightly fancy; and having no rule, nor culture, could scarce avoid falling into these whimsical niceties. and this vivacity corrupted their taste in all other things. for, they used sophisms in their logic: they loved little knacks in architecture; and invented witticisms in poetry and eloquence. all these are of the same kind.

B. This is curious indeed. you think then that a sermon full of forced antitheses, and such kind of ornaments, is like a church built in the Gothic way.

A. Yes: I think the comparison is just.

B. Let me ask you but one question more; and then you shall go.

A. What is it?

B. It seems very difficult to give a particular account of facts, in a noble style: and yet we ought to do

so if we talk solidly as you require. pray, what is the proper stile for expatiating in such cases?

A. We are so much afraid of a low strain, that our expressions are usually dry, lifeless, and indeterminate. they who praise a saint, pitch on the most magnificent phrases: they tell us he was an admirable person; that his virtues were celestial; that he was rather an angel, than a man. and thus the whole encomium is a mere declamation, without any proof; and without drawing a just character. on the contrary, the ancient Greeks made little use of these general terms which prove nothing: but they insisted much on facts, and the particulars of a character. for instance Xenophon does not once say in all his *Cyropaedia*, that Cyrus was an admirable man: but throughout the work he makes us really admire him. thus it is that we ought to praise holy persons, by entering into the particular detail of their sentiments and actions. but there prevails an affected politeness among the pedantic and conceited part of all ranks and professions, who value themselves upon their wit, or learning. they never venture to use any expression but what they reckon fine and uncommon. they talk always in a * high strain; and would think it beneath them to call things by their proper names. now in true eloquence almost every thing may be introduced. the perfection of poetry itself, (which is the loftiest kind of composition) de-

* Prima est eloquentiae virtus perspicuitas; et quo quisque ingenio minus valet, hoc se magis *attollere*, et *dilatare* conatur: ut statura breves in digitos eriguntur; et plura infirmi minantur. nam tumidos, et corruptos, et *timulos*, et quocumque alio cacozeliae genere peccantes, certum habeo, non virium, sed *infirmittatis* vitio laborare: ut corpora non robore, sed valetudine, inflantur. Quint. lib. ii. c. 3.

pend on a full and lively description of things in all their circumstances. when Virgil represents the Trojan fleet leaving the African shore or arriving on the coast of Italy, you see every proper circumstance exactly described. but we must own that the Greeks entered still further into the particular detail of things; and followed nature more closely in representing the smallest circumstances. for which reason, many people would be apt (if they dared) to reckon Homer too plain and simple in his narrations. in this antient beautiful simplicity, (which few are able to relish,) this poet very much resembles the holy scripture: but in many places the sacred writings surpass his, as much as he excels all the other antients, in a natural and lively representation of things.

B. In relating facts then ought we to describe every individual circumstance that belongs to them?

A. No: we should represent nothing to the hearers but what deserves their attention; and helps to give a clear and just idea of the things we describe: so that it requires great judgment to make a right † choice of circumstances. but we must not be afraid of mentioning such as can be any-way serviceable: for it is a false politeness that leads us to suppress some useful things, because we do not think them capable of any ornament. besides, Homer has shown us by his example, that we might give a * proper grace and embellishment to every subject.

† See Longinus. §. x.

* *First follow nature, and your judgment frame
By her just standard, which is still the same:
Unerring nature, still divinely bright,
One clear, unchang'd, and universal light;*

B. Seeing you condemn the florid swelling stile; what kind do you reckon fittest for public use?

A. There ought to be a variety of stile in every discourse. we should rise in our expression when we speak of lofty subjects; and be † familiar, in common ones, without being coarse, or grovelling. in most cases, an easy simplicity and exactness is sufficient: tho' some things require vehemence, and sublimity. if a painter should draw nothing but magnificent palaces, he could not follow truth; but must paint his own fancies; and by that means, soon cloy us. he ought to copy nature in its agreeable varieties: and after drawing a stately city, it might be proper to represent a desert, and the huts of shepherds. most of those who aim at making fine harangues injudiciously labour to cloath all their thoughts in a * pompous gaudy drefs: and

*Life, force, and beauty must to all impart,
At once the source, and end, and test of art.
Art from that fund each just supply provides,
Works without show; and without pomp presides.
Those rules of old discover'd, not devis'd,
Are nature still, but nature methodiz'd:
Nature like monarchy, is but restrain'd
By the same laws which first herself ordain'd.*

Mr. Pope's Essay on Criticism.

† Εἰν ἄρ' ὁ ἰδιωτισ-
μὸς ἐνίστε τῷ κόσμῳ πα-
ραπολὺ ἐμφανισικώτερον.
ἐπιγινώσκεται γὰρ αὐτόθεν
ἐκ τῷ κοινῷ βίῃ. τὸ δὲ σὺν-
ηδες ἤδη πρὸς ὅτερον —
ταῦτα γὰρ ἐγγὺς παραξύ-
ει τὴν ἰδιώτην, ἀλλ' οὐκ

ἰδιωτεύει τῷ σημαντικῷ.

Longinus. §. xxxi.

* Namque illud genus ostentationi compositum, solum petit audientium voluptatem: ideoque omnes dicendi artes aperit, ornatumque orationis exponit — mala affectatio, per omne dicendi genus peccat. nam et tumida, et exilia, et praedulcia, et abundantia,

they fancy that they have succeeded happily, when they express some general remarks in a florid lofty stile. their only care is to fill their discourse with abundance of ornaments, to please the vitiated taste of their audience: like ignorant cooks who know not how to season dishes, in a proper, natural way; but fancy they must give them an exquisite relish by mixing excessive quantities of the most seasoning things. but the stile of a true orator has nothing in it that is swelling or ostentatious: he always adapts it to the subjects he treats of, and the persons he instructs: and manages it so judiciously that he never aims at being sublime and lofty, but when he ought to be so.

B. What you said concerning the language of scripture, makes me wish earnestly that you would shew us the beauty of it. may we not see you some time to-morrow?

A. I shall hardly have time to-morrow: but I will endeavour to wait on you this evening. and since you seem so desirous of it, we will talk of the word of God: for hitherto we have only spoken of the language of men.

C. Farewell, Sir, I beg of you to be punctual: otherwise we must come and find you out.

et arcessita, et exultantia sub idem nomen cadunt. denique κακόζηλον vocatur, quicquid est ultra virtutem; quoties in- genium judicio caret, et spe-	cie boni fallitur; omnium in eloquentia vitiorum pessimum: nam caetera cum vitentur, hoc petitur. Quintil. lib. viii. c. 3.
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THE THIRD DIALOGUE.

C. **I** Began to fear, Sir, that you would not come ;
and was very near going to see for you at
Mr. —

A. I was detained by a perplexing affair I had upon
my hands: but I have got rid of it to my satisfaction.

B. I am very glad of it: for, we wanted you extremely to finish the subject we were talking of in the morning.

C. Since I parted with you, Sir, I heard a sermon at —, and I thought of you. the preacher spoke in a very edifying manner: but I question whether the common people understood him, or not.

A. It happens but too often (as I heard an ingenious lady observe,) that our preachers speak Latin, in English. the most essential quality of a good preacher is to be instructive: but he must have great abilities and experience to make him so. on the one hand he must be perfectly acquainted with the force of scripture-expressions: on the other, he must understand the capacity of those to whom he preaches; and adapt himself to it. now this requires a solid knowledge, and great discernment. preachers speak every day to people of the scripture, the church, the Mosaic law, the gospel; of sacrifices; of Moses and Aaron, and Melchisedec; of the prophets, and apostles: but there is not sufficient care taken to instruct the people in the true meaning of these things, and in the characters of those holy persons. one might follow some preachers, twenty years, without getting sufficient knowledge of religion.

B. Do you think that people are really ignorant of those things you mentioned?

C. For my part, I believe they are: and that few or none understand them enough to receive any benefit from sermons.

B. That may be true of the lowest rank of people.

C. Well; ought not they to be instructed as well as others? do not they make up the bulk of mankind?

A. The truth is, persons of rank and fashion have but little more knowledge of religion than the common people. there are always three fourth-parts of an ordinary audience, who do not know those first principles of religion, in which the preacher supposes every one to be fully instructed.

B. Would you then have him explain the catechism in his sermons to a polite congregation?

A. I grant there is a due regard to be had to an audience; and discretion to be used in adapting a discourse to their capacity. but still without giving the least offence, a preacher might remind the most discerning hearers of those passages of the sacred history, which explain the origin and institution of holy things. this way of having recourse to the first foundations of religion, would be so far from seeming low, that it would give most discourses that force and beauty which they generally want. this is particularly true with regard to the mysteries of religion: for the hearers can never be instructed, nor persuaded, if you do not trace things back to their source. for example, how can you make them understand what the church says, after * St. Paul, that Jesus Christ is our Passover, if you do not explain to them the Jewish Passover, which

* I. Cor. v. 7.

was appointed to be a perpetual memorial of their deliverance from Egypt, and to typify a more important redemption that was reserved for the Messiah. it is for this reason, I said that almost every thing in religion is historical. and if preachers would have a full knowledge of this truth, they must be very conversant in the scripture —

B. You must excuse my interrupting you on this subject; Sir, you told us in the morning that the scriptures are eloquent: and I was glad to hear you say so. let me intreat you to shew us how we may discern the beauties of scripture; and in what its eloquence consists. the Latin bible seems to me most vulgar and inaccurate. I see no delicacy in it. what is it then that you so much admire?

A. The Latin is only a literal version in which out of respect to the original, there are many Greek and Hebrew phrases retained. do you despise Homer because he has been sordidly translated into French?

B. But the Greek itself (which is the original language of the New Testament) appears to me very coarse and unpolite.

A. The apostles were not acquainted with the genuine Greek, but used that corrupted kind which prevailed among the Hellenistical Jews. for this reason St. Paul says * 'I am rude in speech,' but not in knowledge. it is very obvious that the apostle here only meant he was not a master of the Greek tongue; tho' he solidly explained the doctrine of the holy scripture.

C. Had not the apostles the gift of speaking unknown tongues?

A. Undoubtedly: and they even conveyed that

* II. Cor. xi. 16.

gift to great numbers of their illiterate converts. but as for the languages that the apostles had learnt in a natural way, we have reason to believe that the Spirit of God permitted them to speak as they did before. St. Paul who was a citizen of Tarsus, in Cilicia, naturally spake the corrupted Greek used among the Jews there: and we find that this is the language he wrote in. St. Luke seems to have understood Greek a little better.

C. But I always thought that in the passage you mentioned, St. Paul gave up all pretences to oratory: and regarded nothing but the simplicity of the evangelical doctrine. nay I have heard several persons of worth and good judgment affirm that the holy scripture is not eloquent. St. Jerom was punished for being disgusted at the simplicity of scripture; and liking Tully better. St. Austin (in his confessions) seems to have fallen into the same fault. did not God intend to try our faith by the obscurity, and even by the lowliness of the scripture-style, as well as by the poverty of our Redeemer?

A. You seem, Sir, to carry this point too far. whether do you chuse to believe St. Jerom when he was punished for having followed his youthful studies too closely in his retreat; or when he had made the greatest progress both in sacred and profane learning; and, in an epistle to Paulinus, invited him to study the scripture; assuring him that he would find more charms in the prophets than he had discovered in the heathen poets? or, was St. Austin's judgment better in his youth, when the seeming meanness of the sacred style disgusted him; than when he composed his books Of the Christian doctrine? there he often says

that St. Paul was powerfully perswasive; and that the torrent of his eloquence must be perceived by the most unattentive reader. he adds that in the apostle, wisdom did not seek after the beauty of language; but that the beauties of language offered themselves, and attended his wisdom. he quotes many lofty passages of his epistles; wherein he shews all the art and address of the heathen orators far outdone. St. Austin excepts only two things in this comparison: he says, that these orators studied the ornaments of eloquence; but that the beauties of oratory naturally followed St. Paul, and others of the sacred writers. and then he owns that he did not sufficiently understand the delicacies of the Greek tongue, to be a competent judge, whether there be the same numbers and cadence of periods in the sacred text, that we meet with in profane authors. I forgot to tell you that he quotes that passage of the prophet Amos which begins thus * ‘wo
 ‘to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria——:’ and assures us that in this place the prophet has surpassed every thing that is sublime in the heathen orators.

C. But how do you understand these words of St. Paul; † ‘my speech and my preaching was not with
 ‘the enticing (perswasive) words of man’s wisdom--?’ does he not tell the Corinthians that he came not to preach Christ to them, with the sublimity of discourse and of wisdom: that he ‘knew nothing among them
 ‘but Jesus, and him crucified:’ that his preaching was founded not upon the persuasive language of human wisdom, and learning, but upon the sensible effects of the Spirit and the power of God; to the end

* Ch. vi.

† I. Cor. xi. 4.

(as he adds) ' that their faith should not depend upon ' the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.' what is the meaning of these words, Sir? what stronger expressions could the apostle use to condemn this art of persuasion that you would establish? for my part, I freely own that at first I was glad when you censured all those affected ornaments of discourse that vain declaimers are so fond of: but the sequel of your scheme does not answer the pious beginning of it. I find that you would still make preaching a human art; and banish apostolical simplicity from the pulpit.

A. Tho' you judge very unfavourably of my esteem for eloquence; I am not dissatisfied at the zeal with which you censure it. however, Sir, let us endeavour to understand one another aright. there are several worthy persons who judge, with you, that eloquent preaching is repugnant to the simplicity of the gospel. but when we have mutually explained our sentiments, perhaps they may be found to agree. what then do you mean by simplicity? and what do you call eloquence?

C. By simplicity, I mean a discourse without any artifice or magnificence. by eloquence, I mean a discourse full of art and ornaments.

A. When you require an artless simple discourse, would you have it without order, and connection: without solid and convincing proofs; and without a proper method for instructing the ignorant? would you have a preacher say nothing that is pathetic; and never endeavour to affect the heart?

C. Far from it: I would have a discourse that both instructs, and moves people.

A. That would make it eloquent: for we have seen

before that eloquence is the art of instructing and persuading men, by moving their passions.

C. I grant that preachers ought to convince and affect their hearers: but I would have them to do it without art, by an apostolical simplicity.

A. The more artless and natural such a convincing persuasive eloquence is, it must be the more powerful. but let us enquire whether the art of persuasion be inconsistent with the simplicity of the gospel. what mean you by art?

C. I mean a system of rules that men have invented, and usually observe in their discourses, to make them more beautiful, elegant, and pleasing.

A. If by art you only mean this invention to render a discourse more handsome and polished in order to please people; I will not dispute with you about words; but will readily acknowledge that this art ought not to be admitted into sermons: for, (as we agreed before) this vanity is unworthy of eloquence, and far more unbecoming the sacred function. this is the very point about which I reasoned so much with Mr. B.. but if by art, and eloquence, you mean what the most judicious writers among the antients understood; we must then set a just value upon eloquence.

C. What did they understand by it?

A. According to them the art of eloquence comprehends those means that wise reflection and experience have discovered to render a discourse proper to persuade men of the truth; and to engage them to love and obey it. and this is what you think every preacher should be able to do. for did you not say that you approved of order, and a right manner of instruction; solidity of reasoning, and pathetic move-

ments; I mean such as can touch and affect people's hearts? now this is what I call eloquence: you may give it what name you please.

C. Now I comprehend your notion of eloquence: and I cannot but acknowledge that such a manly, grave, serious manner of persuasion would much become the pulpit; and that it seems even necessary to instruct people with success but how do you understand those words of St. Paul that I quoted before? do they not expressly condemn eloquence?

A. In order to explain the apostle's words, let me ask you a few questions.

C. As many as you please, Sir.

A. Is it not true that the apostle argues with wonderful strength in his epistles? does he not reason finely against the heathen philosophers, and the Jews, in his epistle to the Romans? is there not great force, in what he says concerning the inability of the Mosaic law to justify men?

C. Certainly.

A. Is there not a chain of solid reasoning in his epistle to the Hebrews, about the insufficiency of the antient sacrifices; the rest that David promised to the children of God, besides that which the Israelites enjoyed in Palestine after Joshua's days; concerning the order of Aaron, and that of Melchisedec; and the spiritual and eternal covenant that behoved to succeed the carnal and earthly one which was established by the mediation of Moses, for a time only? are not the apostle's arguments on these several subjects very strong and conclusive?

C. I think they are.

A. When St. Paul therefore disclaimed the use of

‘ the perswasive words of man’s wisdom, ’ he did not mean to condemn true wisdom, and the force of reasoning.

C. That appears plainly from his own example.

A. Why then do you think that he meant to condemn solid eloquence, any more than true wisdom?

C. Because he expressly rejects eloquence in that passage which I desired you to explain.

A. But doth he not likewise disclaim wisdom? the place seems to be more express against wisdom, and human reasoning, than against eloquence. and yet he himself reasoned frequently; and was very eloquent. you grant that he argued well: and St. Austin assures you that the apostle was an orator.

C. You plainly point out the difficulty; but you do not answer it. pray, shew us how it is to be solved.

A. St. Paul reasoned much; he perswaded effectually: so that he was really an excellent philosopher and an orator. but as he tells us in the place you quoted; his preaching was not founded on human reasoning, nor on the art of perswasion. it was a ministry of divine institution, that owed its efficacy to God alone. the conversion of the whole world was, according to the antient prophecies, to be the great and standing miracle of the christian religion. this was the Kingdom of God that came from Heaven; and was to convert and reduce all the nations of the earth to the worship and service of the true God. Jesus Christ crucified, by his being declared to them was to draw them all to himself merely by the power of his cross. the philosophers had reasoned and disputed, without converting either themselves, or others. the Jews had been intrusted with a law that shewed them their mi-

series, but could not relieve them. all mankind were convinced of the general disorder and corruption that reigned among them. Jesus Christ came with his cross; that is, he came poor, humble, and suffering for us. to silence our vain, presumptuous reason, he did not argue like the philosophers; but he determined with authority. by his miracles, and his grace, he shewed that he was above all. that he might confound the false wisdom of men, he sets before them the seeming folly and scandal of his cross; that is, the example of his profound humiliation. that which mankind reckoned * folly, and at which they were most offended, was the very thing that should convert and lead them to God. they wanted to be cured of their pride, and their excessive love of sensible objects: and to affect them the more, God shewed them his Son crucified. the apostles preached him; and walked in his steps. they had not recourse to any human means, neither to philosophy, nor rhetoric, nor policy, nor wealth, nor authority. God would have the sole glory of his work; and the success of it to depend entirely on himself: he therefore chose what is weak; and rejected what is strong; to display his power in the most sensible manner. he brought all out of nothing in the conversion of the world, as well as at the creation of it. that work therefore had this divine character stamped upon it; that it was not founded upon any thing that the world admired, or valued. it would only have weakened and frustrated the wonderful power of the cross (as † St. Paul says) to ground the preaching of the gospel upon natural means. it was necessary that without human help, the gospel should of itself open people's hearts;

* I Cor. i. 23, 25.

† I Cor. i. 17.

and by that prodigious efficacy shew mankind that it came from God. thus was human wisdom confounded, and rejected. now what must we conclude from hence? this only; that the conversion of the nations, and the establishment of the Christian church, was not owing to the learned reasonings, and perswasive words of man's wisdom. it does not imply that there was no eloquence, nor wisdom in several of those who first preached the gospel: but only, that they did not depend on this eloquent wisdom; nor did they study it as a thing that was to give an efficacy to their doctrine. it was founded (as the apostle tells us) * not upon the perswasive discourses of human philosophy; but solely upon the effects of the spirit, and the power of God; that is, upon the miracles that struck the eyes and minds of men, and upon the inward operation of the divine grace.

C. According to your reasoning then, they make void the efficacy of our Saviour's cross who ground their preaching upon human wisdom and eloquence.

A. Undoubtedly. the ministry of the word is intirely built upon faith: and the preachers of it ought to pray, and purify their hearts; and expect all their success from heaven. they should arm themselves with 'the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;' and not depend on their own abilities. this is the necessary preparation for preaching the gospel. but tho' the inward fruit and success of it must be ascribed to grace alone, and the efficacy of God's word; there are yet some things that man is to do on his part.——

*Οὐκ ἐν πειθοῖς ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας λόγοις——

I Cor. ii. 4.

C. Hitherto you have talked very solidly: but I see plainly you are now returning to your first opinion.

A. I did not change it. do not you believe that the work of our salvation depends upon God's grace?

C. Yes: it is an article of faith.

A. You own however that we ought to use great prudence in chusing a right station and conduct in life; and in avoiding dangerous temptations. now do we make void the grace of God, and its efficacy, by watching, and prayer, and a prudent circumspection? certainly not. we owe all to God: and yet he obliges us to comply with an external order of human means. the apostles did not study the vain pomp, and trifling ornaments of the heathen orators. they did not fall into the subtil reasonings of the philosophers, who made all to depend upon those airy speculations in which they lost themselves. the apostles only preached Jesus Christ with all the force, and magnificent simplicity of the scripture-language. it is true they had no need of any preparation for their ministry; because the Spirit, who descended upon them in a sensible manner, supplied them with words in preaching the gospel. the difference then betwixt the apostles, and their successors in the ministry, is, that these, not being miraculously inspired like the apostles, have need to prepare themselves, and to fill their minds with the doctrine and spirit of the scripture, to form their discourses. but this preparation should never lead them to preach in a more artless manner than the apostles. would you not be satisfy'd if preachers us'd no more ornaments

in their sermons than St. Peter, St. Paul, St. James, St. Jude, and St. John did?

C. I think I ought to require no more. and I must confess that since (as you say) eloquence consists chiefly in the order, force, and propriety of the words by which men are perswaded and moved; it does not give me so much offence as it did. I always reckoned eloquence to be an art that is inconsistent with the simplicity of the gospel.

A. There are two sorts of people that have this notion of it; the false orators, who are widely mistaken in seeking after eloquence amidst a vain pomp of words; and some pious persons who have no great depth of knowledge: but tho' out of humility they avoid that false rhetoric which consists in a gaudy ostentatious stile; they yet aim at true eloquence, by striving to perswade, and move their hearers.

C. I now understand your notions exactly well: let us now return to the eloquence of the scripture.

A. In order to perceive it, nothing is more useful than to have a just taste of the antient simplicity: and this may best be obtained by reading the most † antient Greek authors. I say the most antient. for those Greeks whom the Romans so justly despised, and called Graeculi, were then intirely degenerate. as I told you before, you ought to be perfectly acquainted with

† Ενδείκνυται δ' ἡμῖν ἕτος ὁ ἀνὴρ (ΠΛΑΤΩΝ) ὃ βελοῖ-
μεθα μὴ κατολιγαρῆσαι, ὥς ἔ-
ἄλλη τις παρὰ τὰ εἰρημένα ὁδὸς
ἐπὶ τὰ ὑψηλὰ τένει. ποία δὲ
ἔστις αὕτη; ἢ τῶν ἑμπεροσθεν

μεγάλων συγγραφέων ἔ ποιη-
τῶν μίμησις τε ἔ ζήλωσις. ἔ τῶ-
ν γε, φίλτατε, ἀπρίξ ἐχω μέθα
τῷ σκοπῷ.

Longinus. §. xiii.

Homer, Plato, Xenophon, and the other earliest writers. after that, you will be no more surpris'd at the plainness of the scripture-style: for in them you will find almost the same kind of customs, the same artless narrations, the same images of great things, and the same movements. the difference betwixt them upon comparison is much to the honour of the scripture. it surpasses them vastly in native simplicity, liveliness, and grandeur. Homer himself never reached the sublimity of Moses's songs; especially the * last, which all the Israelitish children were to learn by-heart. never did any ode, either Greek, or Latin, come up to the loftiness of the Psalms: particularly that which begins thus; † 'The mighty God even the Lord, hath spoken,' surpasses the utmost stretch of human invention. nei-

* Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak: and hear O earth, the words of my mouth. my doctrine shall drop as the rain; my speech shall distil as the dew; as the small rain upon the tender herb; and as the showers upon the grass. because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. he is the rock: his work is perfect: for, all his ways are judgment: a God of truth, and without iniquity: just and right is he. — for the Lord's portion is his people: Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. he found him in a desert land; and in the waste howling wilderness: he led him about; he instructed him; and kept him as the apple of his eye. as an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings; taketh them; beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him; and there was no strange god with him. he made him ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of the fields; he made him suck honey out of the rock; and oil out of the flinty rock. —

† The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken; and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him: and it shall be very tempestuous

* Deut. xxxii. v. 1. 2. 3. 4. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13.

† Psal. I. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.

ther Homer nor any other poet ever equalled † *Isaiah* describing the majesty of God, in whose sight the ' nations of the earth are as the small dust; yea less than ' nothing, and vanity;' seeing it is ' He that stretcheth ' out the heavens like a curtain, and spreadeth them ' out as a tent to dwell in.' sometimes this prophet

round about him. he shall call to the heavens from above; and to the earth, that he may judge his people. gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. and the heavens shall declare his righteousness; for God is judge himself.

† *Cant. xl. 9. O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain: O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength: lift it up; be not afraid: say unto the cities of Judah, behold your God. behold the Lord God will come with a strong hand; and his arm shall rule for him: behold his reward is with him; and his work before him. he shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom; and shall gently lead those that are with young. who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand? and meted out the heaven with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure; and weighed the mountains in scales; and the hills in a balance? who hath di-*

rected the Spirit of the Lord; or being his counsellor hath taught him? — behold the nations are as a drop of a bucket; and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. and Lebanon is not sufficient to burn; nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt-sacrifice. all nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing and vanity. to whom will you liken God? or what likeness will you compare unto him? — have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth? it is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth; and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers: that stretcheth out the heavens like a curtain; and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in. — to whom then will you liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the holy One. lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things; that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names, by the great-

† *Ver. 10. 11. 12. 13. 15. 16. 17. 18. 21. 22. 25. 26. 28.*

has all the sweetness of an eclogue, in the † smiling images he gives us of peace: and sometimes he soars so high as to leave every thing below him. what is there in antiquity that can be compared to the * La-

ness of his might; for that he is strong in power, not one faileth. — wast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not; neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding!

† See ch. xi. and xxxv.

* Chap. i. 1. *How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people! how is she become as a widow! she that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary! she weepeth sore in the night; and her tears are on her cheeks. among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her: all her friends have dealt treacherously with her; they are become her enemies. — for these things I weep: mine eye, mine eye, runneth down with water; because the comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me: my children are desolate; because the enemy prevailed. — behold, O Lord; for I am in distress; my bowels are troubled: mine heart is turned within me; for I have grievously rebelled: abroad the sword bereaveth; at home there is as death, — how hath the Lord*

covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in his anger; and cast down from heaven unto the earth the beauty of Israel; and remembered not his foot-stool in the day of his anger! — the Lord hath purposed to destroy the wall of the daughter of Zion: he hath stretched out a line; he hath not withdrawn his hand from destroying: therefore he made the rampart, and the wall to lament; they languished together. — mine eyes do fail with tears, my bowels are troubled: my liver is poured upon the earth, for the destruction of the daughter of my people: because the children and the sucklings swoon in the streets of the city. they say to their mothers, where is corn and wine? when they swooned as the wounded in the streets of the city; when their soul was poured out into their mother's bosom. — arise; cry out in the night; in the beginning of the watches pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord: lift up thy hands towards him, for the life of thy young children, that faint for hunger in the top of every street. behold, O Lord, and consider to whom thou hast done this. shall the women eat their

* V. 2. 16. 20. ch. ii. 1. 8. 11. 12. 19. 20. 21. ch. iii. 39.

mentations of Jeremiah when he tenderly deplores the miseries of his country? or to the prophecy of † Na-

fruit, children of a span long? shall the priest and the prophet be slain in the sanctuary of the Lord? the young and the old lie on the ground in the streets: my virgins and my young men are fallen by the sword: thou hast slain them in the day of thy anger, thou hast killed and not pityed. wherefore doth a living man complain; a man for the punishment of his sins? —

† Chap. i. 3. The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power; and will not at all acquit the wicked. the Lord hath his way in the whirl-wind, and in the storm; and the clouds are the dust of his feet. — the mountains quake at him; and the hills melt; and the earth is burnt at his presence; yea the world, and all that dwell therein. who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire; and the rocks are thrown down by him. he that dasheth in pieces is come up before thy face: keep the munition: watch the way: make thy loyns strong: fortify thy power mightily. — the shield of his mighty men is made red: the valiant men are in scarlet: the chariots shall be with flaming torches, in the day of his preparation; and the fir-trees shall be terribly shaken. the chariots shall rage in the

streets; they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways: they shall seem like torches: they shall run like the lightnings. — but Nineveh is of old like a pool of water: yet they shall flee away. stand, stand, shall they cry; but none shall look back. take ye the spoil of silver; take the spoil of gold: for there is no end of the store, and glory out of the pleasant furniture. she is empty, and void, and waste; and the heart melteth; and the knees smite together; and much pain is in all loyns; and the faces of them all gather blackness.

— the horseman lifteth up both the bright sword, and the glittering spear; and there is a multitude of slain, and a great number of carcases; and there is no end of their corpses: they stumble upon their corpses. — behold thy people in the midst of thee are women: the gates of thy land shall be set wide open unto thine enemies: the fire shall devour thy bars. — thy crowned are as the locusts; and thy captains as the great grasshoppers which camp in the hedges in the cold day; but when the sun ariseth they flee away; and their place is not known where they are. thy shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria: thy nobles shall dwell in the dust: thy people is scattered upon the mountains: and no man gathereth them. —

† V. 5. 6. ch. ii. 1. 3. 4. 8. 9. 10. ch. iii. 3. 13. 17. 18.

hum when he foresees in spirit the proud Nineveh fall under the rage of an invincible army. we fancy that we see the army, and hear the noise of arms and chariots. every thing is painted in such a lively manner as strikes the imagination. the prophet far out-does Homer. read likewise ‡ Daniel denouncing to Belshazzar the divine vengeance ready to overwhelm him: and try if you can find any thing in the most sublime originals of antiquity that can be compared to those passages of sacred writ. as for the * rest of scripture, every portion of it is uniform and consistent; every part bears the peculiar character that becomes it; the history, the particular detail of laws, the descriptions, the vehement and pathetic passages, the mysteries, and prophecies, and moral discourses; in all these there appears a natural and beautiful variety. in short, there is as great a difference betwixt the heathen poets, and the prophets; as there is betwixt a false enthusiasm, and the true. the sacred writers, being truly inspired, do in a sensible manner express something divine: while the others, striving to soar above themselves, always shew human weakness in their loftiest flights. the second book of Maccabees, the book of Wisdom especially at the end; and Ecclesiasticus in the beginning, discover the † gaudy swelling stile that the degenerate

‡ Ch. v. 15—29.

* See the letter to the Academy.

† Wisdom. ch. xvii. 17.—*They were all bound with one chain of darkness: whether it were a whistling wind, or a melodious noise of birds among the spreading branches; or a pleasing fall of water running violently: or a terrible sound of stones cast down;*

or a running that could not be seen of skipping beasts, or a roaring voice of most savage wild beasts; or a rebounding echo from the hollow mountains: these things made them to swoon for fear.— Ch. xviii. 20. *Yea the tasting of death touched the righteous al-*

Greeks had spread over the east; where their language was established with their dominion. but it would be in vain to enlarge upon all these particulars: it is by reading that you must discover the truth of them.

B. I long to set about it: we ought to apply ourselves to this kind of study, more than we do.

C. I easily conceive that the old testament is written with that magnificence; and those lively images you speak of. but you say nothing of the simplicity of Christ's words.

A. That simplicity of stile is intirely according to the antient taste. it is agreeable both to Moses and the prophets, whose expressions Christ often uses. but tho' his language be plain and familiar, it is however figurative and sublime in many places. I could easily shew by particular instances, (if we had the books here to consult,) that we have not a preacher of this age who is so figurative in his most studied sermons, as Jesus Christ was in his most popular discourses. I do not mean those that St. John relates, where almost every thing is sensibly divine: I speak of his most familiar discourses recorded by the other evangelists. the apostles wrote in the same manner; with this difference; that Jesus Christ being master of his doctrine,

<i>so, and there was a destruction of the multitude in the wilderness: but the wrath endured not long. for then the胆less men made haste and stood forth to defend them; and bringing the shield of his proper ministry, even prayer and the propitiation of incense, set himself against the wrath, and so brought the calamity to an end; declaring that he was thy servant.</i>	<i>so he overcame the destroyer, not with strength of body, nor force of arms, but with a word subdued he him that punished, alledging the oaths and covenants made with the fathers. — for in the long garment, was the whole world: and in the four rows of the stones, was the glory of the fathers graven: and thy majesty upon the diadem of his head.</i>
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delivers it calmly. he says just what he pleases; and speaks, with the utmost easiness, of the heavenly kingdom and glory, as of his * father's house. all those exalted things that astonish us, were natural and familiar to him: he is born there; and only tells us what he † saw; as he himself declares. on the contrary the apostles ‡ sunk under the weight of the truths that were revealed to them: they want words, and are not able to express their ideas. hence flow those digressions and obscure passages in St. Paul's writings, and those transpositions of his thoughts, which shew his mind was transported with the abundance and greatness of the truths that offered themselves to his attention. all this irregularity of stile shews that the spirit of God forcibly guided the minds of the apostles. but notwithstanding these little disorders of their stile, every thing in it is noble, lively, and moving. as for St. John's Revelation, we find in it the same grandeur and enthusiasm that there is in the prophets. the expressions are oftentimes the same: and sometimes this resemblance of stile gives a mutual light to them both. you see therefore that the eloquence of scripture is not confined to the books of the old testament; but is likewise to be found in the new.

C. Supposing the scripture to be eloquent, what will you conclude from it?

A. That those who preach it, may, without scruple, imitate, or rather, borrow, its eloquence.

C. We find that preachers do chuse those passages they think most beautiful.

A. But it mangles the scripture thus to shew it to Christians only in separate passages. and however

* Joh. xiv. 2. † Ch. viii. 38. ‡ 2 Cor. xii. 2, 4, 7.

great the beauty of such passages may be, it can never be fully perceived unless one knows the connection of them: for, every thing in scripture is connected: and this coherence is the most great and wonderful thing to be seen in the sacred writings. for want of a due knowledge of it, preachers mistake those beautiful passages; and put upon them what sense they please. they content themselves with some ingenious interpretations; which being arbitrary, have no force to persuade men, and to reform their manners.

B. What would you have preachers to do? must they use only the language of scripture?

A. I would have them at least not think it enough to join together a few passages of scripture that have no real connection. I would have them explain the principles, and the series of the scripture-doctrine; and take the spirit, the stile, and the figures of it; that all their discourses may serve to give people a right understanding, and true relish of God's word. there needs no more to make preachers eloquent: for by doing this, they would imitate the best model of antient eloquence.

B. But in this case we behaved (as I said before) to explain the several parts of scripture as they lie.

A. I would not confine all preachers to this. one might make sermons upon the scripture without explaining the several parts of it, as they lie. but it must be owned, that preaching would be quite another thing, if according to antient custom, the sacred books were thus explained to the people in a connected judicious manner. consider what authority a man must have who should say nothing from his own invention; but only follow and explain the thoughts and words

of God. besides he would do two things at once. by unfolding the truths of scripture, he would explain the text; and accustom the people to join always the sense and the letter together. what advantage must they not reap if they were used to nourish themselves with this spiritual bread? an audience who had heard the chief points of the Mosaic law explained, would be able to receive far more benefit from an explication of the truths of the gospel, than the greatest part of Christians are now. the preacher we spoke of before, has this failing among many great qualities, that his sermons are trains of fine reasoning about religion; but they are not religion itself. we apply ourselves too much to drawing of moral characters, and inveighing against the general disorders of mankind; and we do not sufficiently explain the principles and precepts of the gospel.

C. Preachers chuse this way, because it is far easier to declaim against the follies and disorders of mankind; than to explain the fundamental truths and duties of religion judiciously. to be able to describe the corruptions of the age, they need only have some knowledge of men, and things; and proper words to paint them. but to set the great duties of the gospel in a just light, requires an attentive meditation and study of the holy scriptures. there are but few preachers who have such a solid comprehensive knowledge of religion as can enable them to explain it clearly to others. nay, there are some who make pretty discourses; and yet could not catechise the people, and far less make a good homily.

A. Very true; it is here that our preachers are most defective. most of their fine sermons contain only phi-

losophical reasonings. sometimes they preposterously quote scripture only for the sake of decency or ornament: and it is not then regarded as the word of God; but as the invention of men.

C. You will grant, I hope, that the labours of such men tend to make void the cross of Christ.

A. I give them up; and contend only for the eloquence of scripture which evangelical preachers ought to imitate. so that we are agreed on this point: provided you will not excuse some zealous preachers, who under pretence of apostolical simplicity, do not effectually study either the doctrine of scripture, or the powerful manner of persuasion that we are taught there. they imagine that they need only bawl, and speak often of hell and the devil. now without doubt a preacher ought to affect people by strong, and sometimes even by terrible images: but it is from the scripture that he should learn to make powerful impressions. there he may clearly discover the way to make sermons plain and popular, without losing the force and dignity they ought always to have. for want of this knowledge a preacher oftentimes doth but stun and frighten people: so that they remember but few clear notions: and even the impressions of terror they received, are not lasting. this mistaken simplicity that some affect, is too often a cloak for ignorance: and at best it is such an unedifying manner of address, as cannot be acceptable either to God, or men. nothing can excuse such homely preachers, but the sincerity of their intentions. they ought to have studied and meditated much upon the word of God, before they undertook to preach. a priest who understands the scripture fully, and has the gift of speaking, supported by the au-

thority of his function, and of a good life, might make excellent discourses without great preparation. for one speaks easily of such truths as make a clear and strong impression on his mind. now above all things, such a subject as religion must furnish exalted thoughts; and excite the noblest sentiments: and this is the design of eloquence. but a preacher ought to speak to his audience as a father would talk to his children, with an affectionate tenderness: and not like a declaimer, pronouncing an harangue with stiffness, and an affected delicacy. it were to be wished indeed that, generally speaking, none were allowed to feed the Christian flocks but their respective shepherds, who ought best to know their wants. in order to this, none should be chosen for pastors, but such as have the gift of preaching. the neglect of this occasions two evils: one is, that dumb pastors, and such as speak without abilities are little esteemed. another evil is, that the function of voluntary preachers allures many vain, ambitious spirits, that endeavour to distinguish themselves this way. you know that in former ages the ministry of the word was reserved for the bishops; especially in the western church. you must have heard of St. Austin's case; that contrary to the established rule, he was obliged to preach while he was only a presbyter; because that Valerius, his bishop and predecessor, was a stranger who could not talk easily: this was the beginning of that custom in the western parts. in the east, priests sooner began to preach; as appears from St. Chrysostom's sermons which he made at Antioch, when he was only a presbyter.

C. I grant that generally speaking the office of preaching should be reserved for the parochial-clergy.

this would be the way to restore to the pulpit that simplicity and dignity that ought to adorn it. for if pastors joined the knowledge of the scriptures to their experience in the ministerial function, and the conduct of souls; they would speak in such a way as is best adapted to the wants of their flocks. whereas those preachers who give up themselves chiefly to study and speculation, are less able to obviate people's prejudices and mistakes: they do not suit their discourses to vulgar capacities: and insist chiefly on such general points as do not instruct nor affect men: to say nothing of the weight and influence that the shepherd's own voice must have among his flock, above a stranger's. these, methinks, are convincing reasons for preferring a pastor's sermons before other people's. of what use are so many young preachers, without experience, without knowledge, and without piety? it were better to have fewer sermons, and more judicious ones.

B. But there are many priests who are not pastors, and who preach with great success. how many persons are there of the religious orders, who fill the pulpit to advantage?

C. I own there are many: and such men ought to be made pastors of parishes; and even be constrained to undertake the care of souls. were not Anchorets of old forced from their beloved solitude, and raised to public stations? that the light of their piety might shine in the church and edify the faithful?

A. But it does not belong to us to regulate the discipline of the church. every age has its proper customs, as the circumstances of things require. let us shew a regard to whatever the church tolerates: and without indulging a censorious humour, let us finish our character of a worthy preacher.

C. What you have said already gives me, I think, an exact idea of it.

A. Let us hear then what you reckon necessary to make a compleat preacher.

C. I think that he ought to have studied solidly, during his younger days, whatever is most useful in the poetry and eloquence of the * antients.

A. That is not necessary. It is true when one has finished such studies successfully, they may be of use to him, even towards a right understanding of the scriptures: as St. Paul has shewn in a treatise he composed on this very subject, but after all, this sort of study is rather useful than necessary. in the first ages of the church, the clergy found a want of this kind of learning. those indeed who had applied themselves to it, in their youth, turned it to the service of religion, when they became pastors: but such as had neglected these studies before, were not permitted to follow them, when they had once engaged themselves in the study of the sacred writings; which were then reckoned to be sufficient. hence came that passage in the † apostolical constitutions, which exhorts Christians not to read the heathen authors. ‘if you want history (says that ‘book,) or laws, or moral precepts, or eloquence, or ‘poetry, you will find them all in the scriptures.’ in effect we have already seen that it is needless to seek elsewhere, for any thing that is necessary to form our

* *The Greek and Roman authors have a spirit in them, a force both of thought and expression, that later ages have not been able to imitate: Buchanan only excepted; in whom, more particularly in his Psalms, there is a*

beauty, and life, an exactness as well as a liberty, that cannot be imitated, and scarce enough commended. Discourse of the pastoral care. ch. viii.

† B. I. c. 6.

taste and judgment of true eloquence. St. Austin says that the smaller stock we have of other learning, we ought so much the more to enrich ourselves out of that sacred treasure: and that seeing our notions are too scanty to express divine things in a proper way, we have need to exalt and improve our knowledge, by the authority of scripture; and our language, by the dignity of its expressions. but I ask your pardon for interrupting you. go on, Sir, if you please.

C. Well then; let us be content with the sufficiency of scripture. but shall we not add the fathers?

A. Without doubt: they are the channels of tradition. it is by their writings that we learn the manner in which the church interpreted the scripture in all ages.

C. But are preachers obliged to explain every passage of scripture according to the interpretations that the fathers have given us. we find that one father gives a spiritual or mystical sense; and another gives a literal one. now which must we chuse? for there would be no end of mentioning them all.

A. When I affirm that we ought to interpret the scripture according to the doctrine of the fathers; I mean, their constant and uniform doctrine. they frequently gave pious interpretations that differed very much from the literal sense; and were not founded on the propheticall allusions, and the mysterious doctrines of religion. now seeing these interpretations are arbitrary, we are not obliged to follow them; 'seeing ' they did not follow one another.' but in those places where they explain the sentiments of the church concerning points of faith or practice; it is not allowable to explain the scripture in a sense contrary to the doc-

trine of the fathers. this is the authority that we ought to ascribe to them.

C. This seems clear enough. I would therefore have a clergyman (before he begin to preach) be thoroughly acquainted with the doctrine of the fathers, that he may follow it. I would even have him study the principles they laid down for their conduct; their rules of moderation; and their method of instruction.

A. Right: they are our masters. they had an exalted genius: they had great and pious souls, full of heroic sentiments. they had a singular knowledge of the tempers and manners of men: and acquired a great repute; and a very easy way of preaching. we even find that many of them were very polite, and knew whatever is decent, either in writing or speaking in public; and what is handsome both in familiar conversation, and in discharging the common duties of life. doubtless all this must have conduced to render them eloquent; and fit to gain upon people's minds. accordingly we find in their writings a politeness not only of language, but of sentiments and manners; which is not to be seen in the writers of the following ages. this just taste and discernment, (which agrees perfectly well with simplicity, and rendered their persons acceptable, and their behaviour engaging) was highly serviceable to religion. and in this point we can scarce imitate them enough. so that after the scriptures, the knowledge of the fathers will help a preacher to compose good sermons.

C. When one has laid such a solid foundation, and edified the church by his exemplary virtues; he would then be fit to explain the gospel with great authority, and good effect. for, by familiar instructions,

and useful conferences, (to which we suppose him to have been accustomed betimes,) he must have attained a sufficient freedom and easiness of speaking. now if such pastors applyed themselves to all the particular duties of their function, as administering the sacraments; directing pious souls; and comforting afflicted, or dying persons; it is certain they could not have much time to make elaborate sermons, and learn them word for word. * ‘ the mouth behoved to speak from ‘ the abundance of the heart; ’ and communicate to the people the fulness of gospel-knowledge, and the affecting sentiments of the preacher. as for what you said yesterday, about getting sermons by-heart; I had the curiosity to seek out a passage in St. Austin that I had read before: it is to this purpose. ‘ he thinks that ‘ a preacher ought to speak in a more plain and sensible manner than other people: for, seeing custom ‘ and decency will not permit his hearers to ask him ‘ any questions; he should be afraid of not adapting ‘ his discourse to their capacity. wherefore (says he) ‘ they who get their sermons by heart, word for word, ‘ and so cannot repeat and explain a truth till they ‘ see that their hearers understand it, must lose one ‘ great end and benefit of preaching. ’ you see by this, Sir, that St. Austin only prepared his subject, without burdening his memory with all the words of his sermons. tho’ the precepts of true eloquence should require more; yet the rules of the gospel-ministry will not permit us to go farther. as for my own part, I have been long of your opinion concerning this matter; because of the many pressing necessities in the Christian church, that require a pastor’s continual applica-

* Matth. xii. 34.

tion. while a priest, who ought to be * ‘a man of God, ‘thorowly furnished unto all good works,’ should be diligent in rooting out ignorance and offences from the field of the church; I think it unworthy of him to waste his time in his closet, in smoothing of periods; giving delicate touches to his descriptions; and inventing quaint divisions. when one falls into the method and employment of these pretty preachers, he can have no time to do any thing else; he applys himself to no other business, or useful kind of study: nay to refresh himself, he is oftentimes forced to preach the same sermons over and over again. but what kind of eloquence can a preacher pretend to, when his hearers know before-hand all the expressions, and pathetic figures he will use. this is a likely way indeed to surprize, and astonish; to soften, and move and perswade them. this must be a strange manner of concealing one’s art; and of letting nature speak. to tell you freely, Sir, this gives me great offence. what! shall a dispenser of the divine mysteries be an idle declaimer, jealous of his reputation, and fond of † vain pomp? shall he not dare to speak of God to his people, without having ranged

* II. Tim. iii. 17.

† Sed his ornatus (repetam enim) vitilis, fortis et sanctus sit—non debet quisquam ubi *maxima rerum momenta* versantur, de verbis esse sollicitus—prima virtus est vitio carere. igitur ante omnia, ne speremus ornatam orationem fore, quae probabilis non erit. *probabile* autem, Cicero id genus dicit, quod non plus, minusve

est quam decet. non quia commi expoliri que non debeat; nam et haec ornatus pars est; sed quia vitium est, ubique quod nimium est. itaque vult esse auctoritatem et pondus in verbis: sententias vel graves, vel aptas opinionibus hominum ac moribus.

Quintil. lib. viii. c. 3.

all his words, and learned his lesson by heart like a school-boy?

A. I am very much pleased with your zeal. what you say is true. but we must not however inveigh against this abuse with too much violence: for, we ought to shew a regard to persons of worth and piety, who, out of deference to custom, or being prepossessed by example, have with a good design fallen into the method that you justly censure. but I am ashamed to interrupt you so often. Go on, I beseech you.

C. I would have a preacher explain the whole plan of religion; and unfold every part of it, in the most intelligible manner; by shewing the primitive institution of things; and pointing out the sequel and tradition of them: that by shewing the origin and establishment of religion, he might destroy the objections of unbelievers, without offering to attack them openly; lest he should thereby lay a stumbling-block in the way of illiterate well-meaning Christians.

A. That is very right. the best way of proving the truth of religion, is to explain it justly: for it carries its own evidence along with it, when we represent it in its native purity. all other proofs that are not drawn from the very foundation of religion itself, and the manner of its propagation, are but foreign to it. thus, for instance, the best proof of the creation of the world, of the deluge, and the miracles of Moses, may be drawn from the nature of those miracles; and the artless impartial manner in which the Mosaic history is written. a wise unprejudiced person needs only to read it, to be fully convinced of its truth.

C. I would likewise have a preacher assiduously explain to the people in a connected train not only all

the particular precepts and mysteries of the gospel; but likewise the origin and institution of the sacraments; the traditions, the discipline, the liturgy, and ceremonies of the church. by these instructions he would guard the faithful against the objections of heretics; and enable them to give an account of their faith: and even to affect such heretics as are not obstinate: he would strengthen people's faith, give them an exalted notion of religion; and make them receive some edification and benefit from what they see in the church. whereas with the superficial instruction that is generally given them at present, they comprehend little or nothing of what they see; and have but a very confused idea of what they hear from the preacher. it is chiefly for the sake of this connected scheme of instruction that I would have fixed persons, such as pastors, to preach in every parish. I have often observed that there is no art, nor science, that is not taught coherently by principles and method, in a connected train of instructions. religion is the only thing that is not taught thus to christians. in their childhood they have a little, dry catechism put into their hands, which they learn by-rote, without understanding the sense of it. and after that, they have no other instruction but what they can gather from sermons upon unconnected general subjects. I would therefore, (as you said) have preachers teach people the first principles of their religion; and by a due method, lead them on to the highest mysteries of it.

A. That was the antient way. they began with catechizing: after which, pastors taught their people the several doctrines of the gospel, in a connected train of homilies. this instructed Christians fully in

the word of God: you know St. Austin's book, of 'catechizing the ignorant;' and St. Clement's tract, which he composed to shew the Heathen whom he converted what were the doctrines and manners of the Christian philosophy. in those days the greatest men were employed in these catechetical instructions; and accordingly they produced such wonderful effects, as seem quite incredible to us.

C. In fine, I would have every preacher make such sermons as should not be too troublesome to him; that so he might be able to preach often. they ought therefore to be short; that without fatiguing himself or wearying the people he might preach every Sunday, after the gospel. as far as we can judge, those aged bishops who lived in former times and had constant labours to employ them, did not make such a stir as our modern preachers do in talking to the people in the midst of divine service; which the bishops themselves read * solemnly every Lord's day. a preacher

* *A clergyman must bring his mind to an inward and feeling sense of those things that are prayed for in our offices: this will make him pronounce them with an equal measure of gravity and affection; and with a due slowness, and emphasis. I do not love the theatrical way of the church of Rome, in which it is a great study, and a long practice, to learn in every one of their offices, how they ought to compose their looks, gesture and voice: yet a light wandering of the eyes, and a hasty running through the prayers, are things highly unbecoming:*

they very much lessen the majesty of our worship; and give our enemies advantage to call it dead, and formal; when they see plainly that he who officiates, is dead and formal in it. a deep sense of the things prayed for, a true recollection and attention of spirit, and a holy earnestness of soul, will give a composure to the looks, and a weight to the pronunciation, that will be tempered between affectation on the one hand, and levity on the other.

Discourse of the pastoral care. ch. v iii.

now-a-days gets little credit unless he comes out of the pulpit sweating and breathless ; and unable to do any thing the rest of the day. the bishop's upper vestment (which was not then opened at the shoulders as it is now, but hung equally down on all sides,) probably hindered him from moving his arms, as some preachers do. so that as their sermons were short, so their action must have been grave and moderate. now, Sir, is not all this agreeable to your principles? is not this the idea you gave us of good preaching?

A. It is not mine: it is the current notion of all antiquity. the farther I inquire into this matter, the more I am convinced that the antient form of sermons was the most perfect. the primitive pastors were great men: they were not only very holy, but they had a compleat clear knowledge of religion, and of the best way to perswade men of its truth: and they took care to regulate all the circumstances of it. there is a great deal of wisdom, hidden under this air of simplicity: and we ought not to believe that a better method could have been afterwards found out. you have set this whole matter in the best light, and have left me nothing to add: indeed you have explained my thoughts better than I should have done myself.

B. You magnify the eloquence, and the sermons of the fathers mightily.

A. I do not think that I commend them too much.

B. I am surpris'd to see, that after you have been so severe against those orators who mix turns of wit with their discourses, you should be so indulgent to the fathers, whose writings are full of jingling antitheses, and quibbles, intirely contrary to all your rules. I wish you would be consistent with yourself.

pray, Sir, unfold all this to us. particularly, what do you think of Tertullian?

A. There are many excellent things in him. the loftiness of his sentiments is oftentimes admirable. besides he should be read for the sake of some principles concerning tradition; some historical facts; and the discipline of his time. but as for his stile, I do not pretend to justify it. he has many false and obscure notions; many harsh and perplexed metaphors: and the generality of readers are most fond of his faults. he has * spoiled many preachers. for, the desire of say-

* One of the greatest and most remarkable proofs of the strong influence that some imaginations have over others, is the power that some others have to persuade, without any proof. for example, the turn of words that we find in Tertullian, Seneca, Montaigne, and some other authors, has so many charms, and so much lustre, that they dazzle most readers — their words, however insignificant, have more force than the reasons of other people — I protest I have a great value for some of Tertullian's works; and chiefly for his apology against the Gentiles; his book of prescriptions against heretics; and for some passages of Seneca; tho' I have very little esteem for Montaigne. Tertullian was indeed a man of great learning: but he had more memory, than judgment — the regard he shewed to the visions of Montanus, and his prophetesses, is an unquestionable proof of his weak judgment. the disorder of his imagination sensibly appears in the heat, the transports, and enthusiastic flights he falls into, upon trifling subjects — what could he infer from his pompous descriptions of the changes that happen in the world? or how could they justify his laying aside his usual dress, to wear the philosophical cloak? the moon has different phases: the year has several seasons: the fields change their appearance in summer and winter: whole provinces are drowned by inundations, or swallowed up by earthquakes — in fine, all nature is subject to changes: therefore he had reason to wear the cloak rather than the common robe! — nothing can excuse the silly arguments and wild fancies of this author, who, in several others of his works, as well as in that de Pallio, says every thing that comes into his head, if it be a far-fetched conceit, or a bold expression; by which he hoped to

ing something that is singular leads them to study his works : and his uncommon pompous stile dazles them. we must therefore beware of imitating his thoughts or expressions; and only pick out his noble sentiments, and the knowledge of antiquity.

B. What say you of St. Cyprian? is not his stile too swelling?

A. I think it is: and it could scarce be otherwise in his age and country. but tho' his language has a tang of the African roughness, and the bombast that prevailed in his days; yet there is great force and eloquence in it. every where we see a great soul who expresseth his sentiments in a very noble moving manner. in some places of his works we find † affected ornaments: especially in his epistle to Donatus; which St. Austin quotes however as a letter full of eloquence. he says that God permitted those strokes of vain oratory to fall from St. Cyprian's pen, to shew posterity how much the spirit of Christian simplicity had, in his following works, retrenched the superfluous ornaments

shew the vigour, (we must rather call it, the disorder) of his imagination.

Malebranche's recherche de la verité. Liv. ii. p. 3. c. 3.

† Locus enim cum die convenit; et mulcendis sensibus, ac fovendis, ad lepes auras blandientis autumnus hortorum facies amoena consentit. hic jucundum sermonibus diem ducere, et studentibus fabulis in divina praecepta conscientiam pectoris erudire. ac ne colloquium nostrum arbiter profanus impediat, aut clamor

intemperans familiae strepentis obtundat, petamus hanc sedem. dant secessum vicina secreta, ubi dum erratici palmitum lapsus nexibus pendulis per arundines bajulas repunt, viteam porticum frondea tecta fecerunt : bene hic studia in aures damus; et dum in arbores, et in vites quas videmus, oblectante prospectu, oculos amoenamus, animum simul et auditus instruit, et pascit obtutus.

Cypr. ad Donat. epist. II.

of his stile; and reduced it within the bounds of a grave and modest eloquence. this (says St. Austin) is the distinguishing character of all the letters that St. Cyprian wrote afterwards: which we may safely admire and imitate, as being written according to the severest rules of religion; tho' we cannot hope to come up to them without a great application. in fine, tho' his letter to Donatus (even in St. Austin's opinion) be too elaborately adorned; it deserves however to be called eloquent. for, notwithstanding its many rhetorical embellishments, we cannot but perceive that a great part of the epistle is very serious, and lively; and most proper to give Donatus a noble idea of Christianity. in those passages where he is very earnest, he neglects all turns of wit, and falls into a sublime and vehement strain.

B. But what do you think of St. Austin? is he not the most † jingling quibbler that ever wrote? will you defend him?

† *Misi nuncios meos omnes et sensus interiores, ut quaerem te, et non inveni, quia male quaerebam. video enim, lux mea, Deus qui illuminasti me, quia male te per illos quaerebam quia tu es intus, et tamen ipsi, ubi intraveris, nesciverunt—et tamen cum Deum meum quaero, quaero nihilominus quandam lucem, quam non capit oculus; quandam vocem super omnem vocem, quam non capit auris; quandam odorem super omnem odorem, quem non capit naris; quandam dulcorem su-*

per omnem dulcorem, quem non capit gustus; quandam amplexum super omnem amplexum, quem non capit tactus. ista lux quidem fulget ubi locus non capit: ista vox sonat, ubi spiritus non rapit: odor iste redolet, ubi flatus non spargit: sapor iste sapit ubi non est edacitas; amplexus iste tangitur, ubi non divellitur. Aug. Solil. §. 31.

Odies praeclara et pulchra, nesciens vesperum, non habens occasum—ubi non erit hostis impugnans, neque ulla illecebra, sed summa et certa

A. No: I cannot vindicate him in that. it was the reigning fault of his time; to which his quick lively fancy naturally inclined him. this shews that he was not a perfect orator. but notwithstanding this defect, he had a great talent for perswasion. he reasoned generally with great force: and he is full of noble notions. he knew the heart of man intirely well, and was so polite, that he carefully observed the strictest decency in all his discourses. in short, he expressed himself almost always in a pathetic, gentle, insinuating manner. now ought not the fault we observe in so great a man to be forgiven?

C. I must own there is one thing in him that I never observed in any other writer: I mean, that he has a moving way, even when he quibbles. none of his works are more full of jingling turns, than his confessions, and soliloquys: and yet we must own they are * tender, and apt to affect the reader.

A. It is because he checks the turns of his fancy as much as he can, by the ingenuous simplicity of his pious affecting sentiments. all his works plainly shew

securitas, secura tranquillitas, et tranquilla jocunditas, jocunda felicitas, foelix aeternitas, aeterna beatitudo, et beata Trinitas, et Trinitatis unitas, et unitatis Deitas, et Deitatis beata visio, quae est gaudium Domini Dei tui. —

Aug. *Solil.* §. 35.

* Quemadmodum desiderat cervus ad fontes aquarum, ita desiderat anima mea ad te, Deus. sitivit anima mea ad te Deum, fontem vivum: quando veniam et apparebo ante

faciem tuam? O fons vitae, vena aquarum viventium; quando veniam ad aquas dulcedinis tuae de terra deserta, invia et inaquosa; ut videam virtutem tuam, et gloriam tuam, et *satiem* ex aquis misericordiae tuae *sitim* meam? *sitio*, Domine, fons vitae es, *satia* me. *sitio*, Domine, *sitio* te Deum vivum: O quando veniam et apparebo, Domine, ante faciem tuam?

Aug. *Solil. cap. xxxv.*

his love of God. he was not only conscious of it; but knew well how to express to others the strong sense he had of it. now this tender affecting way, is a part of eloquence. but we see besides that St. Austin knew exactly all the essential rules of it. he tells us * that a persuasive discourse must be simple and natural: that art must not appear in it: and that if it be too fine and elaborate, it puts the hearers upon their guard. to this purpose he applies these words, which you cannot but remember, '*qui sophisticè loquitur odibilis est.*' he talks likewise very judiciously of the mixing different kinds of style in a discourse; of ranging the several parts of it in such a manner as to make it increase gradually in strength and evidence: of the necessity of being plain and familiar, even as to the tones of the voice, and our action in particular passages; tho' every thing we say should still have a dignity when we preach religion. in fine, he likewise shews the way to awaken and move people. these are St. Austin's notions of eloquence. but if you would see with how much art he actually influenced people's minds, and with what address he moved their passions, according to the true design of eloquence; you must read the account he gives of a discourse he made to the people of Caesarea, in Mauritania, in order to abolish a barbarous practice. it seems there prevailed among them an antient custom, which they had carryed to a monstrous pitch of cruelty. his business therefore was to draw off the people from a spectacle that delighted them extremely. judge now what a difficult enterprize this was. however, he tells us that after he had talked to them for some time, they spake aloud and applauded

* De doct. Chr. l. II.

him. but he concluded that his discourse had not persuaded them, seeing they amused themselves in commending him. he thought he had done nothing while he only raised delight and admiration in his hearers: nor did he begin to hope for any good effect from his discourse, till he saw them weep. ‘in effect (says he) ‘the people were at length prevailed on to give up this ‘delightful spectacle: nor has it been renewed these ‘eight years.’ is not St. Austin then a true orator? have we any preachers that are able to talk so powerfully now? as for St. Jerom, he has some faults in his stile: but his expressions are manly, and great. he is not regular; but he is far more eloquent than most of those who value themselves upon their oratory. we should judge like mere grammarians if we examined only the stile and language of the fathers. you know there is a great difference between eloquence, and what we call elegance, or purity, of stile.... St. Ambrose likewise fell into the fashionable defects of his time; and gives his discourse such ornaments as were then in vogue. perhaps these great men (who had higher views than the common rules of rhetoric,) conformed themselves to the prevailing taste of the age they lived in, that they might the better insinuate the truths of religion upon people’s minds, by engaging them to hear the word of God with pleasure. but notwithstanding the puns and quibbles that St. Ambrose sometimes uses, we see that he wrote to Theodosius with an inimitable force and persuasion. how much tenderness does he express when he speaks of the death of his brother Satyrus? in the Roman breviary we have a discourse of his, concerning John the Baptist’s head, which, he says, Herod respected and drea-

ded, even after his death. if you observe that discourse, you will find the end of it very sublime. St. Leo's style is swelling, but truly noble. Pope Gregory lived still in a worse age: and yet he wrote several things with much strength and dignity. we ought to distinguish those failings into which the degeneracy of arts and learning led these great men, in common with other writers of their several ages: and at the same time observe what their genius and sentiments furnished them with, to persuade their hearers.

C. But do you think then that the taste of eloquence was quite lost in those ages that were so happy for religion?

A. Yes: within a little time after the reign of Augustus, eloquence, and the Latin tongue began to decline apace. the fathers did not live till after this corruption: so that we must not look on them as compleat models. we must even acknowledge that most of the sermons they have left us are composed with less skill and force, than their other works. when I shewed you from the testimony of the fathers that the scripture is eloquent; (which you seemed to believe upon their credit;) I knew very well that the oratory of these witnesses, is much inferior to that of the sacred writings themselves. but there are some persons of such a depraved taste, that they cannot relish the beauties of Isaiah; and yet they will admire Chrysologus; in whom (notwithstanding his fine name,) there is little to be found besides abundance of evangelical piety couched under numberless quibbles, and low witticisms. in the east, the just way of speaking and writing, was better preserved: and the Greek tongue continued for some time, almost in its antient

purity. St. Chrysostom spake it very well. his stile, you know, is copious; but he did not study false ornaments. all his discourse tends to perswasion: he placed every thing with judgment; and was well acquainted with the * holy scripture, and the manners

* ΒΑΣ. Τί ἔν' ὁ Παῦ-
λος, φησιν; ἐκ ἐπαύδασε
ταύτην κατορθώσῃ τὴν
ἀρετὴν, ὃ δὲ ἐγκαλύπτει ἐ-
πὶ τῇ τῷ λόγῳ πονείᾳ, ἀλ-
λὰ καὶ διαρρήδην ὁμολογεῖ
διώτην ἐαυτὸν εἶναι ———
ΧΡΥΣ. Τῷτο γὰρ, ἔφην, τῷ-
τό ἐσιν ὃ τὰς πολλὰς ἀ-
πώλεσε; καὶ ῥαθυμοτέρως
περὶ τὴν ἀληθῆ διδασκα-
λίαν ἐποίησε. μὴ γὰρ δυνη-
θέντες ἀκριβῶς ἐξετάσαι
τῷ Ἀποστολικῷ φρενῶν τὸ
βάθος, μηδὲ συνιέναι τὴν
τῷ ῥημάτων διάνοιαν, δι-
ετέλεσαν τὸν ἅπαντα χρό-
νον νυσάζοντες καὶ χασμώ-
μοι — οἱ δὲ νῦν ὄντες
(ἀλλ' ὃδὲν δύναμαι δυχε-
ρεῖς εἰπεῖν, ὃ δὲ βαρὺ· καὶ γὰρ
καὶ ταῦτα ἐκ ἐπεμβαίνων
αὐτοῖς λέγω νῦν, ἀλλὰ
θαυμάζων) πῶς ἔφριττι-

σιν ἀνδρὶ τηλικέτω παρα-
βάλλοντες ἐαυτοὺς; εἰ γὰρ καὶ
τὰ θαύματα ἀφέντες, ἐπὶ
τὸν βίον ἔλθοιμεν τῷ μακα-
ρίῳ, καὶ τὴν πολιτείαν ἐξε-
τάσαιμεν αὐτῷ τὴν ἀγλε-
λικήν, καὶ ἐν ταύτῃ μᾶλλον,
ἢ ἐν τοῖς σημείοις, ὅφει νι-
κῶντα τὸν ἀθλητὴν τοῦ
Χρίστου — ἐγὼ δὲ, εἰ μὲν τῆς
λειότητος Ἰσοκράτης ἀπή-
λυν, καὶ τὸν Δημοκρίτου ὄγ-
κον, καὶ τὴν Θουκυδίδου σεμ-
νότητά, καὶ τὸ Πλάτωνος
ὑψος. ἔδει φέρειν εἰς μέσον
ταύτην τοῦ Παύλου τὴν
μαρτυρίαν — ἀλλ' ἐξέσω καὶ
τῇ λέξει πτωχεύειν, καὶ τὴν
συνθήκην τῷ ὀνομάτων ἀ-
πλῆν τινὰ εἶναι καὶ ἀφελῆ·
μόνον μὴ τῇ γνώσει τις καὶ
τῇ τῷ δογμάτων ἀκριβεῖ-
αἰδιότητι ἔσω· μήδ' ἵνα τὴν
οἰκείαν ἀργίαν ἐπικαλύ-

of men. he entered into their hearts; and rendered things familiarly sensible to them. he had sublime and solid notions; and is sometimes very affecting. upon the whole, we must own he is a great orator. St. Gregory Nazianzen is more † concise, and more poetical; but not quite so perswasive. and yet he has several moving passages; particularly, in his funeral oration upon his brother St. Basil; and in his last discourse at taking leave of Constantinople. St. Basil is grave, sententious, and rigid, even in his stile. he had meditated profoundly on all the truths of the gospel: he knew exactly all the disorders and weakneses of human nature;

ψη, τὸν μακάριον ἐκείνον
ἀφαρρίδω τὸ μέγιστον τῶν
ἀγαθῶν, καὶ τὸ τῶν ἐγκω-
μίων κεφάλαιον.

CHRYΣ. de Sacerdotio.

L. iv. §. 6.

† Οὐ μὴν ἔδ' (ὅπερ
ἂν ὑπολάβοι τις ἴσως τῶν
πάντων ἀτόπων, καὶ μοχ-
θηρῶν, οἱ κρίνῃσι, τὰ τῶν
ἄλλων τοῖς οἰκείοις πάθε-
σιν) ἡ χύνθη τῆ βαθμῆ τὴν
τάξιν ἐπιθυμία τῆς μεί-
ζονος. οὐχ ἕτως ἐγὼ, ἢ
τῆ θεῆς μεγέθους, ἢ τῆς ἀν-
θρωπίνης ταπεινώσεως ἁ-
πειρος, ὥς μὴ μέγα νομί-

ζειν πάσῃ ἡμενητῇ φύσει
καὶ ὁπωσοῦν πλησιάζειν
Θεῷ, τῷ μόνῳ φανερ-
τάτῳ καὶ λαμπροτάτῳ καὶ
ὑπερέχοντι πάσης ὑλι-
κῆς, καὶ αὐτῆς φύσεως κα-
θαρότητι—καθαρθῆναι
δεῖ πρῶτον, εἶτα καθᾶραν
σοφιοθῆναι καὶ ἕτω σοφίσαι·
ἡμεῖσαι φῶς, καὶ φωτίσαι·
ἐλγίσαι θεῷ, καὶ προσαγα-
γεῖν ἄλλας· ἀγιοθῆναι καὶ
ἀγιάσαι· χειραγωγῆσαι
μετὰ χειρῶν, συμβαλῆσαι
μετὰ συνέσεως.

GREG. NAZ. Orat. A-pol.

and he had a great sagacity in the conduct of souls. there is nothing more eloquent than his epistle to a virgin that had fallen: in my opinion it is a masterpiece. but now if a preacher should not have formed his taste in these matters before he studies the fathers, he will be in danger of copying the most unaccurate parts of their works; and may perhaps imitate their chief defects in the sermons he composes.

C. But how long continued this false eloquence which succeeded the true kind?

A. Till now.

C. What do you mean? till now!

A. Yes, till now: for we have not yet corrected our taste of eloquence, so much as we imagine. you will soon perceive the reason of it. the barbarous nations that over-ran the Roman empire, did spread ignorance and a bad taste every where. now we descended from them. and tho' learning began to revive in the fifteenth century; it recovered then but slowly. it was with great difficulty that we were brought by degrees to have any relish of a right manner: and even now, how many are there who have no notion of it? however we ought to shew a due respect not only to the Fathers, but to other pious authors, who wrote during this long interval of ignorance. from them we learn the traditions of their time, and several other useful instructions. I am quite ashamed of giving my judgment so freely on this point: but, gentlemen, ye desired me. and I shall be very ready to own my mistakes if any-one will undeceive me. but it is time to put an end to this conversation.

C. We cannot part with you till you give us your opinion about the manner of chusing a text.

A. You know very well that the use of texts arose from the antient custom that preachers observed, in not delivering their own reflections to the people; but only explaining the words of the sacred text. however by degrees they came to leave-off this way of expounding the whole words of the gospel that was appointed for the day; and discoursed only upon one part of it, which they called the text of the sermon. now if a preacher does not make an exact explication of the whole gospel, or epistle, he ought at least to chuse those words that are most important; and best suited to the wants and capacities of the people. he ought to explain them well: and to give a right notion of what is meant by a single word, it is oft-times necessary to expound many others in the context. but there should be nothing refined or far-fetched in such instructions. it must look very strange and aukward in a preacher to set up for wit and delicacy of invention, when he ought to speak with the utmost seriousness and gravity; out of regard to the authority of the Holy Spirit whose words he borrows.

C. I must confess I always disliked a forced text. have you not observed that a preacher draws from a text, whatever sermons he pleases? he insensibly warps and bends his subject to make the text fit the sermon that he has occasion to preach. this is frequently done in the time of Lent. I cannot approve of it.

B. Before we conclude, I must beg of you to satisfy me as to one point that still puzzles me, and after that we will let you go.

A. Come then; let us hear what it is. I have a great mind to satisfy you if I can. for I heartily wish

you would employ your parts in making plain and persuasive sermons.

B. You would have a preacher explain the holy scriptures with connection, according to the obvious sense of them.

A. Yes: that would be an excellent method.

B. Whence then did it proceed that the fathers interpreted the scripture quite otherwise? they usually give a spiritual, and allegorical meaning to the sacred text. read St. Austin, St. Ambrose, St. Jerom, Origen and others of the fathers: they find mysteries every where, and seldom regard the letter of scripture.

A. The Jews that lived in our Saviour's days abounded in these mysterious allegorical interpretations. it seems that the Therapeutae who lived chiefly at Alexandria, (and whom Philo reckoned to be philosophical Jews, tho' Eusebius supposes they were primitive Christians,) were extremely addicted to these mystical interpretations. and indeed it was in the city of Alexandria that allegories began to appear with credit among Christians. Origen was the first of the fathers who forsook the literal sense of scripture. you know what disturbance he occasioned in the church. piety itself seemed to recommend these allegorical interpretations. and besides there is something in them very agreeable, ingenious, and edifying. most of the fathers to gratify the humour of the people (and probably their own too) made great use of them. but they kept faithfully to the literal, and the prophetic sense (which in its kind is literal too) in all points where they had occasion to shew the foundations of the Christian doctrine. when the people were fully instructed in every thing they could learn from the let-

ter of scripture; the fathers gave them those mystical interpretations to edify and comfort them. these explications were exactly adapted to the relish of the eastern people, among whom they first arose: for, they are naturally fond of mysterious and allegorical language. they were the more delighted with this variety of interpretations, because of the frequent preaching, and almost constant reading of scripture, which was used in the church. but among us the people are far less instructed: we must do what is most necessary; and begin with the literal sense; without despising the pious explications that the fathers gave. we must take care of providing our daily bread; before we seek after delicacies. in interpreting scripture we cannot do better than to imitate the solidity of St. Chrysostom. most of our modern preachers do not study allegorical meanings, because they have sufficiently explained the literal sense; but they forsake it, because they do not perceive its grandeur; and reckon it dry and barren in comparison of their way of preaching. but we have all the truths and duties of religion in the letter of the scripture, delivered not only with authority, and a singular beauty, but with an inexhaustible variety: so that without having recourse to mystical interpretations, a preacher may always have a great number of new and noble things to say. it is a deplorable thing to see how much this sacred treasure is neglected even by those who have it always in their hands. if the clergy applied themselves to the antient way of making homilies, we should then have two different sorts of preachers. they who have no vivacity, or a poetical genius, would explain the scriptures clearly, without imitating its lively noble manner: and if they

expounded the word of God judiciously, and supported their doctrine by an exemplary life, they would be very good preachers. they would have what St. Ambrose requires, a chaste, simple, clear stile, full of weight and gravity; without affecting elegance, or despising the smoothness and graces of language. the other sort having a poetical turn of mind would explain the scripture in its own stile and figures; and by that means become accomplished preachers. one sort would instruct people with clearness, force, and dignity: and the other would add to this powerful instruction, the sublimity, the * enthusiasm, and vehemence of scripture: so that it would (if I may so say) be intire, and living in them,

* *Inspiration may be justly called divine enthusiasm — for inspiration is a real feeling of the divine presence; and enthusiasm a false one.*

Characteristicks, vol. i. p. 53.

This is what our author advances, when in behalf of enthusiasm he quotes its formal enemies, and shews that they are as capable of it as its greatest confessors and martyrs. so far is he from degrading enthusiasm, or disclaiming it in himself, that he looks on this passion simply considered, as the most natural; and its object, the justest in the world. even virtue itself he takes to be no other than a noble enthusiasm justly directed, and regulated by that high standard which he supposes in the nature of things — nor is thorow honesty, in his hypothesis, any other than this zeal, or passion, moving strongly upon the speci-

es, or view of the decorum, and sublime of actions. others may pursue different forms, and fix their eye on different species, (as all men do on one or other:) the real honest man, however plain or simple he appears, has that highest species, [the honestum, pulchrum, τὸ καλὸν, πρέπον] honesty itself, in view; and instead of outward forms or symmetrys, is struck with that of inward character, the harmony and numbers of the heart, and beauty of the affections, which form the manners, and conduct of a truly social life — upon the whole therefore, according to our author, enthusiasm is in itself, a very natural, honest passion, and has properly nothing for its object but what is good and honest.

Char. vol. iii. Miscel. 2. ch. 1.

as much as it can be in men who are not miraculously inspired from above.

B. Oh, Sir: I had almost forgot an important article. have a moment's patience, I beseech you: a few words will satisfy me.

A. What now? have you any body else to censure?

B. Yes: the panegyrist. do you think that when they praise a saint, they ought so to give his character, as to reduce all his actions, and all his virtues to one point?

A. That shews the orator's invention and refined sense.

B. I understand you. It seems you do not like that method.

A. I think it wrong in most cases. he must put a force upon things, who reduces them all to a single point. there are many actions of one's life that flow from diverse principles, and plainly shew that he possessed very different qualities. the way of referring all the steps of a man's conduct to one cause, is but a scholastic subtilty, which shews that the orator is far from knowing human nature. the true way to draw a just character, is to paint the whole man, and to set him before the hearer's eyes, speaking and acting. in describing the course of his life, the preacher should chiefly point out those passages wherein either his natural temper, or his piety best appeared. but there should always be something left to the hearer's own observation. the best way of praising holy persons is to recount their laudable actions. this gives a body and force to a panegyric: this is what instructs people; and makes an impression upon their minds. but it frequently happens that they return home without knowing any thing of a person's life, about whom they have heard

an hour's discourse: or at least they have heard many remarks upon a few separate facts, related without any connection. on the contrary a preacher ought to paint a person to the life; and shew what he was in every period, in every condition, and in the most remarkable junctures, of his life. this could not hinder one from forming a character of him: nay it might be better collected from his actions, and his words than from general thoughts, and imaginary designs.

B. You would chuse then to give the history of a holy person's life, and not make a panegyric.

A. No: you mistake me. I would not make a simple narration. I should think it enough to give a coherent view of the chief facts in a concise, lively, close, pathetic manner. every thing should help to give a just idea of the holy person I praised; and at the same time to give proper instruction to the hearers. to this I would add such moral reflections, as I should think most suitable. now do not you think that such a discourse as this would have a noble and amiable simplicity? do not you believe that the lives of holy people would be better understood this way, and an audience be more edified, than they generally are? do you not think that according to the rules of eloquence we laid down, such a discourse would even be more eloquent than those over-strained panegyrics that are commonly made?

B. I am of opinion that such sermons as you speak of would be as instructive, as affecting, and as agreeable as any other. I am now satisfied, Sir: it is time to release you. I hope the pains you have taken with me will not be lost: for I have resolved to part with all my modern collections, and Italian wits; and in a serious

manner to study the whole connection and principles of religion; by tracing them back to their source.

C. Farewell, Sir: the best acknowledgment I can make, is to assure you that I will have a great regard to what you have said.

A. Gentlemen, good night. I will leave you with these words of St. Jerom to Nepotian: ‘when you
‘ teach in the church, do not endeavour to draw ap-
‘ plause, but rather sighs and groans from the people:
‘ let their tears praise you. the discourses of a clergy-
‘ man should be full of the holy scripture. be not a
‘ declaimer, but a true teacher of the mysteries of
‘ God.

F I N I S.

A
L E T T E R
FROM THE
A R C H B I S H O P
OF
C A M B R A Y
TO THE
FRENCH ACADEMY;
CONCERNING
RHETORIC, POETRY, HISTORY:
AND
A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE ANTIENTS
AND MODERNS.

F. de S. Fénelon.

G L A S G O W:
PRINTED AND SOLD BY ROBERT AND ANDREW FOULIS.
M. DCC. L.

LETTER

TO

MR. FONTENELLE,

Secretary to the French ACADEMY.

SIR,

I AM ashamed of having deferred so long to answer your letter: but my ill state of health, and a continual hurry of affairs occasioned this delay. the choice that the * Academy has made of you for their

* *Of late in many parts of Europe, some gentlemen met together; submitted to common laws, and formed themselves into academys. but it has been for the most part to a different purpose [from the royal societies:] and most of them only aimed at the smoothing of their stile and the language of their country. of these, the first arose in Italy— but that which excelled all the other, and kept itself longer untainted from the corruptions of speech was the French Academy at Paris. this was composed of the noblest authors of that nation; and had for its founder the great Cardinal de Richelieu: who amongst all his cares, whereby he established and enlarged that monarchy so much, did often refresh himself by directing, and taking an*

account of their progress. and indeed in his own life, he found so great success of this institution, that he saw the French tongue abundantly purifyed, and beginning to take place in the western world, almost as much as the Greek did of old, when it was the language of merchants, soldiers, courtiers, and travellers. but I shall say no more of this academy, that I may not deprive my reader of the delight of perusing their own history written by M. de Pellisson; which is so masculinely, so chastly, and so unaffectedly done, that I can hardly forbear envying the French nation this honour; that while the English Royal Society has so much outgone their illustrious academy in the greatness of its undertaking, it should be so far short of them

perpetual secretary, is worthy of such a society; and promises great advantage to the commonwealth of learning. I own, Sir, that I am somewhat perplexed with the request you make me in the name of a body to which I am so much obliged. but seeing they desire it, I will freely give them my opinion, with a great distrust of myself, and a sincere deference for those who vouchsafe to consult me.

§. I. The dictionary that the academy is forming well deserves to be finished. custom indeed which often changes living languages may at length alter what this dictionary shall determine:

Nedum sermonum stet honos, et gratia vivax.
 Multa renascentur quae jam cecidere; cadentque
 Quae nunc sunt in honore vocabula, si volet usus;
 Quem penes arbitrium est, et jus, et norma loquendi.
 HOR. de Ar. Poet. v. 69.—

however it will be of several uses. it will be serviceable to foreigners who are fond of the French language, and improve themselves by reading the many excellent books of several kinds that are published in it. besides, the most polite among the French themselves may sometimes have occasion to consult the dictionary, about

in the abilities of its historian. I have only this to alledge in my excuse, that as they undertook the advancement of the elegance of speech, so it became their history to have some resemblance to their enterprize: whereas the intention of our's being not the artifice of words, but a bare knowledge of things; my fault may be esteemed the less, that I have written of philosophers without any ornament of eloquence.
 Bp. Sprat's Hist. of the royal society. p. 39, 40.

such words as they doubt of. in fine, when our language becomes much altered, the dictionary will help to explain those books that are written in the present age, and which will be admired by posterity. are we not obliged now to explain the language of Villehardouin, and Joinville? we would be extremely glad to have Greek, and Latin dictionaries made by the antients themselves. It must indeed be owned that the perfecting of dictionaries is a point in which the moderns have out-done the antients. in time, posterity will find the benefit of having a dictionary, that will serve as a key to so many fine books. the value of such a work must increase in proportion to its age.

§. II. It were to be wished, methinks, that the Academy would add a grammar to their dictionary. it would be a great help to foreigners, who are often perplexed with our irregular phrases. the habitual easiness of speaking our own language, hinders us from perceiving what it is that puzzles them. besides, most of the French themselves would sometimes have occasion to consult such an established rule. they learned their mother tongue only by custom: and custom has its defects, every where: each province has its own: Paris is not faultless. even the court itself has a tang of the language of Paris; where the children of the highest quality are usually educated. the most polite people can scarce get rid of the tone, and peculiar expressions they learned in their childhood, by conversing with their attendants, in Gascony, Normandy, or in Paris itself.

The Greeks and Romans did not think it enough

that they learned their native-tongue by mere practice. when they grew up, they studied it in the works of grammarians, to observe the rules, the exceptions, the etymologies, the figurative senses, the structure of the whole language, and its variations.

A learned grammarian would be in danger of making a grammar too elaborate, and too full of precepts. I think it would be best to keep to a short and easy method. at first, give only the most common rules: the exceptions will be learned by degrees. the chief point is to set a learner, as soon as possible, to apply the general rules, by frequent practice: and afterward he will take a pleasure in observing the particular rules that he followed at first, without heeding them.

This grammar could not fix a living language: but it would probably lessen the capricious changes, by which the *mode* governs our words as well as our cloaths. these fanciful alterations may at length perplex and spoil a language, instead of improving it.

§. III. May I not presume here, from an excess of zeal, to offer a proposal, which I readily submit to such a judicious society? our language wants a great many words and phrases. nay I cannot but think that within these hundred years, it has been cramped and impoverished by refining it. it was then somewhat unpolished indeed, and too verbose: but we regret the loss of the old language, when we find it in the works of Marot, Amiot, the Cardinal d'Offat; in the most humorous writings, as well as in the most serious. it had something in it very short, simple, bold, lively, and affecting. if I mistake not, we have thrown out

more words than we have taken in. now I would have none lost; but new ones introduced. I would have every word authorized, that we want, if it sound sweetly, and be not ambiguous.

When we carefully examine the signification of words, we perceive there are scarce any two that have exactly the same meaning. we find very many that do not point out an object distinctly enough, unless we add a second word. hence comes the frequent use of circumlocutions; which oblige us to 'use several words 'to express one idea.' it would be proper to abridge our language, by fixing one plain proper word to express every object, every sentiment, and every action. I would even have several synonymous terms for one thing. this is the way to avoid all ambiguity; to vary our expressions; and to make them all harmonious: seeing we might easily chuse out of several synonymous words, that which runs smoothest with the rest of the period.

The Greeks had a great number of these compounded words; such as Pantocrator, Glaucopis, Eucnemides, &c. and tho' the Latins were more reserved in this point, they imitated the Greeks a little; as in Lanifica, Malefuada, Pomifer, &c. this way of compounding words made their language concise, and their verses more magnificent. besides, the Greeks freely used several dialects in the same poem; to make their versification more various and easy. the Latins enriched their tongue with such foreign words as they needed. for instance, they wanted some terms that were proper for philosophy, which began at Rome very late. so when they learned Greek they borrowed its terms to argue upon the sciences. Tully who

was nicely scrupulous about the purity of his language, very freely used such Greek terms as he needed. a Greek word, when first used, was reckoned uncouth: however some begged leave to use it: and then the permission they obtained, soon turned into custom, and made it current Latin.

I am informed that the † English refuse no words

† *I hope it will not be thought a vain digression, if I step a little aside to recommend to the gentlemen of our nation, the forming of such an assembly, [as the French Academy.] I know indeed that the English genius is not so airy and discourive, as that of some of our neighbours; but that we generally love to have reason set out in plain undeceiving expressions; as much as they to have it delivered with colour and beauty. and besides this, I understand well enough that they have one great assistance to the growth of oratory, which to us is wanting; that is, that their nobility live commonly close together in their cities; and ours for the most part scattered in their country-houses——whereas it is from the frequent conversations in cities, that the humour, and wit, and variety and elegance of language, are chiefly to be fetched. but yet notwithstanding these discouragements I shall not stick to say that such a project is now seasonable to be set on foot; and may make a great reformation in the manner of our speaking and writing. first, the thing itself is no way contemptible. for, the purity*

of speech, and greatness of empire, have in all countries still met together. the Greeks spoke best when they were in their glory of conquest. the Romans made those times the standard of their wit, when they subdued, and gave laws to the world: and from thence by degrees they declined to corruption; as their valour, their prudence, and the honour of their arms did decay: and at last did even meet the northern nations half way in barbarism, a little before they were over-run by their armies.

But besides, if we observe well the English language, we shall find, that it seems at this time more than others, to require some such aid, to bring it to its last perfection. the truth is, it has been hitherto a little too carelessly handled; and, I think, has had less labour spent about its polishing, than it deserves. till the time of King Henry the Eighth, there was scarce any man regarded it but Chaucer; and nothing was written in it which one would be willing to read twice, but some of his poetry. but then it began to raise itself a little, and to sound tolerably well. from that age down to the

that fit their purpose; but borrow freely from any of their neighbours. such a practice is very allowable. in this case, mere use makes a language common to all men. words are but sounds that we arbitrarily use to express our thoughts: and these sounds are in themselves of no value. all people have the same right to use them. what matter is it then, whether a word belongs originally to our language, or comes from a foreign country? it would be very childish to take any exception at such a trifle as the manner of moving our lips, and shaking the air.

Besides, we have no pretence for insisting upon this false point of honour. our language is only a mixture of the Greek, Latin, and Teutonic, with some confused remains of the Gaulish. now seeing the main stock of it is borrowed from other tongues; why should we, through a groundless shame, deny ourselves the liberty of borrowing what words we still want to enrich our language? we ought to take from all quarters, what-

<i>beginning of our late civil wars, it was still fashioning and beautifying itself. in the wars themselves — it received many fantastical terms, which were introduced by our religious sects; and many outlandish phrases, which several writers and translators, in that great hurry brought in and made free as they pleased; and withal it was enlarged by many sound and necessary forms, and idioms which it before wanted. and now when men's minds are somewhat settled, their passions allayed, and the peace of our country gives us the opportunity of</i>	<i>such diversions; if some sober and judicious men would take the whole mass of our language into their hands, as they find it, and would set a mark on the ill words; correct those which are to be retained; admit and establish the good; and make some emendations in the accent, and grammar: I dare pronounce that our speech would quickly arrive at as much plenty, as it is capable to receive; and at the greatest smoothness, which its derivation from the rough German will allow it.</i>
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History of the royal society
p. 41, 42.

ever we need to render it more clear, more exact, more harmonious, and more concise: for all circumlocution weakens a discourse.

It is true the choice of such words as ought to be authorized, should be left to persons of a just taste and approved discernment. Latin words seem to be fittest for this purpose: for, they sound agreeably; and depend on other words, that are already French. people's ears are accustomed to them: there is but one step wanting to make them current; and that is, their having an agreeable termination given them. when the introducing of new words is left to chance, or to ignorant people, or the fancies of women; they admit several terms that are neither so clear, nor so smooth as were to be wished. I own that without a prudent deliberate choice, we should hastily adopt a great number of foreign words, we should make our language a confused unpolished medley of other tongues of a quite different kind: as ill-digested food adds to the mass of blood, an unfutable mixture of parts that rather corrupt, than recruit it. but we must remember, that we have but just thrown off that uncivilized manner which was as antient as our nation.

———Sed in longum tamen aevum

Manferunt, hodieque manent vestigia ruris.

Serus enim Graecis admovit acumina chartis.

HOR. Ep. L. II.

Some will perhaps object that the Academy has not power to make a new term current; and that the public may oppose it. I remember the instance of Tiberius, that formidable master of the Romans lives; who

made himself ridiculous by affecting to introduce the word *Monopolium*. however I believe that the public would readily shew a deference to such a discreet authority as the Academy would use. why might not we affect what the English do every day: when ye find the want of a word, chuse one that sounds sweetly, and is not in the least ambiguous; one that is agreeable to our language, and will help to abridge discourse: every one will perceive the convenience of such a word. let four or five persons use it modestly in familiar conversation; others will repeat it, through a love of novelty: and then it becomes fashionable. thus a path that one opens in a field, soon becomes a beaten way, when the old path is rugged and farthest about.

Besides new and simple words, we want some compounded ones, and phrases: in which the art of joining words together, that were always used apart, might produce a graceful novelty.

Dixeris egregie, notum si callida verbum
Reddiderit junctura novum———

HOR. de Ar. Poet. v. 47—

Thus the Latins said *Velivolum* in one word composed of two: and of two distinct words they made phrases; such as ‘*remigium alarum, lubricus aspici.*’ but in this point we must be sparing and cautious:

—— tenuis cautusque ferendis.

Ibid.

the nations that live in a mild climate relish strong and bold metaphors less than the people of hot countries

do. our language would soon become copious, if those who are in greatest repute for politeness endeavoured to introduce such expressions, (either simple, or figurative) as we have hitherto wanted.

§. IV. An excellent * rhetoric would be far more valuable than a grammar, or any other project that tends only to bring a language to greater perfection. he who would undertake this work, should collect into it all the finest precepts of Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian, Lucian, Longinus, and other famous authors. the passages he might quote from them, would be the ornaments of his work. by taking only the choicest parts of the purest antiquity, he would make a short, curious, delicate treatise.

I am very far from preferring the genius of the ancient orators, to that of the moderns, in all respects. I think the comparison that has been lately made on this subject is very just. for, as trees have now the same form, and bear the same kind of fruit, that they had a thousand years ago; so men continue to produce

* *Nor would I have this new English Academy confined only to the weighing words, and letters: there may be also greater works found out for it. by many signs we may guess that the wits of our nation are not inferior to any other; and that they have an excellent mixture of the spirit of the French, and the Spaniard: and I am confident that we only want a few more standing examples, and a little more familiarity with the antients to excel all the moderns.*

now the best means that can be devised to bring that about, is to settle a fixt and impartial court of eloquence; according to whose censure all books, or authors, should either stand, or fall — the Royal Society is so far from being like to put a stop to such a business, that I know many of its members who are as able as any others to assist in the bringing it into practice.

History of the Royal Society, p. 42, 43.

the same thoughts. but there are two things I must here take the freedom to suggest. the first is, that some climates are more happy than others, for some particular talents, as well as for certain kinds of fruit. for instance, Languedoc and Provence produce raisins and figs of a better taste, than Normandy, or the Netherlands. so the Arcadians had a genius fitter for polite arts than the Scythians. the Sicilians have a better taste of music than the Laplanders. we find likewise that the † Athenians had a more quick and sprightly wit than the Beotians. the second thing I observe, is, that the Greeks had a kind of long tradition that we want. eloquence was more cultivated among them, than it can be in our nation. among the Greeks all things depended on the people: and the people were influenced by haranguing. in their form of government, fortune, reputation, and authority, were obtained by perswading the people. artful vehement declaimers swayed them as they pleased: and oratory was the great spring of affairs both in peace, and war. hence come those numerous harangues mentioned in history, which we reckon incredible; because they are so intirely different from our manners. Diodorus the Sicilian tells us that Nicolaus and Gysippus by turns influenced the Syracusians. the one prevailed with them at first to pardon some Athenian prisoners: and the next moment, the other perswaded them to put those very prisoners to death.

Rhetoric has no such influence now among us.

† Athenis tenue coelum, ex quo acutiores etiam putantur	Attici; crassum Thebis.
	Cic. <i>de Fato</i> §. 4.

Boeotum in *crasso* jurares aëre natum.

HOR.

public assemblies meet only for shows, and ceremonies. we have scarce any remains of a powerful eloquence, either of our old parliaments, or our general states, or our assemblies of * chief persons. every thing is determined secretly in cabinet-councils, or in some particular negotiation. so that our people have no encouragement to use such application as the Greeks did, to raise themselves by the art of perswasion. the public use of eloquence is now almost confined to the pulpit, and the bar.

The warmth of our lawyers to gain a cause relating to the estate of a private person, cannot equal the ambition that the Greek orators had to possess themselves of the supreme authority in a commonwealth. a lawyer loses nothing: nay he gets his fee, tho' he lose the cause he undertook. is he young? he applies himself to plead elegantly, that he may acquire some reputation, without having ever studied either the grounds of the law, or the great models of antiquity. has he established his character? he leaves off pleading, and enriches himself by chamber practice. the most valuable lawyers are those who set facts in a clear light; who recur to some fixed principle of law; and answer all objections according to it. but where are those who have the art of forcing the assent, and moving the hearts of a whole people?

Shall I presume to speak with the same freedom, concerning preachers? God knows how much I reverence the ministers of his word. but I cannot offend any particular person among them, by observing in general, that they are not all equally humble and disinterested. young men who have little reputation are

* De notables.

too forward in preaching. people fancy they see that those seek their own glory, more than God's: and that they are more earnest about making their fortune, than for the salvation of souls. they talk like sparkling orators, rather than like ministers of Christ, and stewards of his mysteries. it was not with this vain pomp of words that St. Peter preached the crucified Jesus in those sermons that converted so many thousand people.

Would we learn the rules of a serious effectual eloquence from St. Austin? he follows Cicero in distinguishing three different kinds of speaking. he says we must speak * *submissively*, in an humble familiar way: † *mildly*, in an engaging, soft, insinuating manner, to make people love the truth: and ‡ *nobly*, that is, in a lofty vehement strain, when we would captivate men, and rescue them from the dominion of their passions. he adds, that the only reason for using such expressions as may please people, is, because there are few men reasonable enough to relish such truths in a discourse as are quite dry and naked. as for the sublime and vehement kind, he would not have it florid; 'nor †† embellished with the ornaments of speech: 'but rather full of the most pathetic emotions——for 'the speaker following the impulse of his thoughts, 'does not industriously study the beauties of elocution; but naturally uses such as rise from the subject 'itself.' the same father observes that a man who fights

* *Submissè.*

† *Temperatè.*

‡ *Granditer.*

†† — Non tam verborum ornatibus comtum est, quam violentum animi affectibus— fertur quippe impetu suo, et		elocutionis pulchritudinem, si occurrerit, vi rerum rapit, non cura decoris assumit. Aug. <i>de Doctr. Chr.</i> L. IV,
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resolutely with a sword enriched with gold and jewels, uses these arms, (without regarding the value of them,) because they are fit for fighting. he adds that God had permitted St. Cyprian to use some affected ornaments in his letter to Donatus; that posterity might see how much the purity of the Christian doctrine had corrected this superfluous vanity, and brought him to a more grave and modest eloquence.

But nothing can be more affecting than the two stories that St. Austin relates to shew us the true way of preaching with success. in the first instance, he was as yet but a priest the holy Bishop Valerius appointed him to preach to the people of Hippo, in order to reclaim them from * riotous feasting on solemn days. he opened the scriptures, and read to them the most vehement and threatening reproaches. he earnestly besought his hearers, ‘by the ignominies and the sorrows, by the cross, by the blood of Christ, not to destroy themselves; to pity him who spake to them with so much affection; and to shew some regard to their venerable old bishop, who, out of tenderness to them, had commanded him to instruct them in the truth. I did not make them weep, (says he,) by first weeping over them: but while I preached, their tears prevented mine. I own that then I could not restrain myself. after we had wept together, I began to entertain great hope of their amendment.’ on this occasion he quite varied from the discourse he had prepared; because he did not now think it suitable to their penitent disposition. in fine, he had the satisfaction of seeing this people tractable, and reformed from that very day.

* Epist. xxix. ad Alyp.

The other occasion wherein he powerfully swayed the minds of his audience, is thus related by himself: ‘ we must not imagine that a man has spoken in a lofty
‘ sublime manner, when he receives many acclamations, and great applause. these are sometimes given
‘ to the lowest turns of wit, and the ornaments of the moderate sort of eloquence. but the sublime strain
‘ oft-times overwhelms people’s minds with its vehemence: it renders them speechless: it melts them into
‘ tears. when I endeavoured to persuade the people of Caesarea in Mauritania to abolish a combat among
‘ the citizens, in which relations, brothers, fathers, and sons, being divided into two parties, fought
‘ publicly for several days, at a certain time of the year; and every man endeavoured to kill the person
‘ he attacked: according to the utmost of my ability, I used the most pathetic expressions to extirpate such
‘ a cruel, inveterate custom from the minds and manners of this people. however I thought I had done
‘ nothing, while I only heard their acclamations. but their tears gave me some hope: their applauses
‘ shewed that I had instructed them; and that they were pleased with my discourse: but their tears declared that their minds were changed. when I saw
‘ them weep, I believed that this horrible custom they had received from their ancestors, and been so long
‘ enslaved to, would be abolished —— it is now eight years ago, and upwards, and by the grace of God
‘ they have been restrained from attempting any such practice.’ if St. Austin had weakened his discourse by the affected ornaments of the florid kind of rhetoric, he would never have been able to reform the people of Hippo and Caesarea.

Demosthenes likewise followed this rule of true eloquence. * ‘ O Athenians! (said he) do not fancy ‘ that Philip is like a deity, assured of success in all his ‘ attempts. among those who seem devoted to his in-

* Μὴ γὰρ ὡς θεῶν νομίζετ’ ἐκείνῳ τὰ παρόντα πεποιημένα πράγματα ἀθανάτια, ἀλλὰ μισεῖ τις ἐκείνον, καὶ δέδιεν, ὧς ἄνδρες Αθηναῖοι, καὶ φθονεῖ, καὶ τῶν πάντων νῦν δοκούντων οἰκείως ἔχεν αὐτῷ—κατέπληχε μύθοι ταῦτα πάντα νῦν ἔκ ἔχοντα ἀποσροφὴν διὰ τὴν ὑμετέραν βραδυλῆτα καὶ ῥαθυμίαν—ὁρᾶτε γὰρ, ὧς ἄνδρες Αθηναῖοι, τὸ πρᾶγμα οἱ προελήλυθεν ἀσελγείας ἄνθρωπος, ὃς ἔδ’ αἴρεσιν ὑμῖν δίδωσι τὴν πρᾶτλιν, ἢ ἄγειν ἡσυχίαν, ἀλλ’ ἀπειλεῖ, καὶ λόγους ὑπερηφάνους, ὡς φασί, λέγει, καὶ ἔκ οἴος τέ ἐσιν ἔχων ἃ κατέσραπται, μένειν ἐπὶ τέτων, ἀλλ’ αἰεὶ τὶ προπεριβάλλει, καὶ κύκλῳ πανήλαχῃ μέλλοντας

ὑμᾶς καὶ καθημένους περισοιχίζεταί. πότε ἔν, ὧς ἄνδρες Αθηναῖοι, πότε ἂν χρὴ πρᾶξετε; ἐπειδὴν τι γένηται; ἐπειδὴν νῦν Δία ἀνάσκει τις ἤ; νῦν δὲ τί χρὴ τὰ γινόμενα ἡγεῖσθαι; ἐγὼ γὰρ οἶμαι τοῖς ἐλαθέροισι μέγιστην ἀναγκὴν τὴν ὑπὲρ τῶν πραγμάτων αἰχὺνὴν εἶναι· ἢ βλέπετε, εἰπέ μοι, περιϊόντες αὐτῶν πυκνάνεσθαι κατὰ τὴν ἀγορὰν, λέγεταί τι καινόν; γένοιτο γὰρ ἂν τι καινότερον ἢ Μακεδὼν ἀνὴρ Αθηναῖος καταπολεμῶν, καὶ τὰ τῶν Ἑλλήνων διοικῶν; τέθνηκε Φίλιππος; ἢ μὰ Δί, ἀλλ’ ἀσθενεῖ· τί δ’ ὑμῖν διαφέρει; καὶ γὰρ ἂν ἔτος τι πάθῃ, ταχέως ὑμεῖς ἕτερον Φίλιππον ποιήσετε——

Demosthenes in Phil. I.

‘terest, there are some that hate, and dread, and envy
‘him — but your negligence and sloth puts all things
‘to a stand—consider, O Athenians, to what conditi-
‘on ye are reduced. this wicked man is gone so far as
‘to leave you no choice betwixt vigilance and inacti-
‘vity. they say he threatens you; and talks arrogant-
‘ly. he is not content now with what he has already
‘conquered: he forms new projects every day; and
‘lays snares for you on all sides, while you continue
‘still backward and slothful. when then, O Atheni-
‘ans! when is it that ye will do what ye ought to do?
‘when will ye attempt something? when will necessity
‘determine you to act? what must we think of what
‘is now a-doing? in my opinion, no necessity can be
‘more urgent upon a free people than what arises from
‘the shame of their past ill conduct. will ye still wan-
‘der about in public places, inquiring after news?
‘what stranger news can there be, than that a man of
‘Macedon subdues the Athenians, and governs all
‘Greece? is Philip dead? says one: no, says another,
‘he is only sick. what avails it, which he is? for if
‘he were dead, you would soon raise up another Phi-
‘lip.’ here good-sense speaks without any other or-
nament than its native force. the orator makes the
truth plain to all the people: he awakens them: he
spurs them on to action: he shews them their impen-
ding ruin. every thing is spoken for the common-good;
not a word to shew his own wit: there is no glittering
thought: all tends to instruct, and move the people.

Indeed the Romans began very late to follow the
example of the Greeks, in improving polite learning.

Graius ingenium, Graius dedit ore retundo
 Musa loqui, praeter laudem nullius avaris.
 Romani pueri longis rationibus affem
 Discunt in partes centum deducere ———

HOR. de Ar. Poet. v. 323—

The Romans were employed about their laws and rights ; about war, and husbandry, and commerce : which gave Virgil occasion to say.

Excudent alii spirantia mollius aera:
 Credo equidem; vivos ducent de marmore vultus.
 Orabunt causas melius: ———

Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento:
 Hae tibi erunt artes: ———

AEN. vi. v. 848.

Salust finely describes the manners of antient Rome; even while he owns that she neglected literature. * ‘ the
 ‘ most prudent (says he) were always the busiest. no
 ‘ one exercised his wit more than his body. the wor-
 ‘ thiest persons chose rather to act wisely, than to de-
 ‘ claim: and to have their brave deeds applauded by
 ‘ others; rather than to bury themselves in recording
 ‘ their neighbour’s good actions.’

We must acknowledge however, according to Livy’s testimony, that a strong and popular eloquence was well cultivated at Rome in the days of Manlius.

* Prudentissimus quisque | cere, quam dicere; sua ab ali-
 negotiosus maxime erat. in- | is benefacta laudari, quam ip-
 genium nemo sine corpore ex- | se aliorum narrare malebat.
 ercebat. optimus quisque fa- |
Sal. Bell. Catij.

this man who had saved the Capitol from the Gauls, tried to stir up the people to sedition. † ‘how long (said he) will ye be ignorant of your strength; which nature discovers to the very beasts? count at least how many ye are — I should think ye would fight more resolutely for liberty, than those men for dominion — how long will ye look upon me? ye may all of you depend on me to the utmost, &c.’ this powerful orator persuaded all the people to pardon him, stretching out his hands towards the Capitol which he had formerly saved. nor could his death be obtained of the multitude, till he was carried into a sacred wood; whence he could no longer shew them the Capitol. * ‘the tribunes found (says Livy) that seeing the people’s minds were so strongly prepossessed with the merit of Manlius, it would be impossible to persuade them he was really guilty, unless they could carry them out of the sight of the Capitol which reminded them of his glorious service — then his crime appeared.’

Every one knows what troubles eloquence occasioned among the Greeks. at Rome Catiline’s oratory brought the republic to the brink of ruin. but that eloquence tended only to persuade people and to move their passions. wit was never employed in it. a florid declaimer could have had no influence in public affairs.

† Quousque tandem ignorabitis vires vestras, quas natura ne belluas quidem ignorare voluit? numerate saltem quot ipsi sitis — tamen acrius crederem, vos pro libertate quam illos pro dominatione certaturos — quousque me circumspectabitis? ego quidem nulli vestrum deero —

Tit. Liv. L. vi. c. 18.

* Apparuit tribunis, nisi oculos quoque hominum liberassent a tanti memoria deco-

Nothing can be more artless than Brutus when he † writes to Cicero with such an air of superiority, as to reprove and silence him. ‡ ‘ you beg our life and safety of ‘ Octavius: (says he) what death could be so bad? by this ‘ request you shew that tyranny is not destroyed; and ‘ that we have only changed our tyrant. consider your

ris nunquam fore in praeoccupatis beneficio animis, vero crimini locum — ibi crimen valuit.

Tit. Liv. L. vi. ch. xx.

† Particulam litterarum tuarum quas misisti Octavio legi — at dolore, quantum animo maximum capere possum, eadem illa pars epistolae scriptae ad Octavium de nobis, affecit. sic enim illi gratias agis de republica, tam suppliciter, ac demisse (quid scribam? pudet conditionis, ac fortunae; sed tamen scribendum est: ‡ comendas nostram salutem illi; quae morte qua non perniciosior?) ut prorsus prae te seras, non sublatam dominationem, sed dominum commutatum esse. verba tua recognosce, et aude negare servientis adversus regem istas esse preces. unum ais esse quod ab eo postuletur, et exspectetur, ut eos cives, de quibus viri boni, populusque Romanus bene existimet, salvos velit. quid si nolit? non erimus? atqui non esse, quam esse per illum, praestat. ego medius fidius non existimo tam omnes Deos aversos esse

a salute populi Romani ut Octavius orandus sit pro salute cujusquam civis, non dicam pro liberatoribus orbis terrarum — hoc tu Cicero, posse fateris Octavium, et illi amicus es? aut, si me carum habes, vis Romae videri; cum ut ibi esse possem, commendandus puero illi fuerim? cui quid agis gratias si ut nos salvos esse velit, et patiatur, rogandum putas? an hoc pro beneficio est habendum, quod se, quam Antonium, esse maluerit, a quo ista petenda essent — ista vero imbecillitas et desperatio, cujus culpa non magis in te residet, quam in omnibus aliis, Caesarem in cupiditatem regni impulit: et Antonio — quod si Romanos nos esse meminissimus: non audacius dominari euperent postremi homines, quam ut nos prohiberemus. tu quidem consularis, et tantorum scelestorum vindex (quibus oppressis vereor ne in breve tempus dilata sit abs te perniciēs,) qui potes intueri quae gesseris —

Apud Cicer. Lib. Epist. ad Brut. ep. xvi.

own words; and deny if you can, that such a petition is fit to be offered to none but a king; and from a slave too. you say that you ask and expect only one favour of him; that he would save the lives of those citizens who are esteemed by persons of worth, and by all the Roman people. what then, unless he shall graciously please, we must not live? but it is better to die, than to owe our lives to him. no, I cannot think the Gods are such declared enemies to the safety of Rome, as to be willing that the life of any citizen should be begged of Octavius; and far less, the lives of those who are the deliverers of the universe — O Cicero, can you confess that he has such power; and still be one of his friends? or if you love me, can you desire to see me at Rome, when I cannot come thither without obtaining that boy's permission? for what do you thank him; if you think that our life must still be begged of him as a favour? must we reckon it a happiness that he chuses to have such favours asked rather of him than of Antony? — this weakness and despair which others are guilty of as well as you, first emboldened Caesar to make himself king — but if we remembered that we are Romans, the ambition of these base men to usurp the government would not have been greater than our courage in defending it. I am afraid that you who have been consul and avenged the public of so many crimes have thereby only delayed our ruin for a short while. how can you behold what you have done? — how weak, indecent, and mean must this discourse have appeared, if it had been filled with witticisms and quaint conceits?

But now shall those who ought to speak like a-

postles, gather up, with industrious affectation, those flowers of rhetoric that Demosthenes, Manlius and Brutus trampled on? shall we imagine that the ministers of the gospel have less concern for the eternal salvation of souls, than Demosthenes for the liberty of his country; less zeal to do good, than Manlius had ambition to seduce the multitude; or less resolution than Brutus, who chose death rather than to owe his life to a tyrant?

I own, that the florid kind of eloquence has its beauties: but they are quite misapplied in those discourses that ought to be animated with the noblest passions; and wherein there is no room for delicate turns of wit. the florid sort of rhetoric can never come up to the true sublime. what would the antients have said of a tragedy, wherein Hecuba laments her misfortunes with points of wit. true grief does not talk thus. or what could we think of a preacher who should, in the most affected jingle of words, shew sinners the divine judgment hanging over their head, and hell open under their feet? there is a † decency to be observed in our language, as in our cloaths. a disconsolate widow does not mourn in fringes, ribbons, and embroidery. and an apostolical minister ought not to preach the word of God in a pompous stile, full of affected ornaments. the Pagans would not have endured to see even a comedy so ill-acted.

† Nunc quid aptum sit, hoc est, quid maxime deceat in oratione, videamus: quamquam id quidem perspicuum est, non omni causae, nec auditori, neque personae, neque tempori congruere orationis unum ge-

nus — omnique in re posse quod deceat facere, artis et naturae est; scire, quid, quandoque deceat, prudentiae.

Cicero de Orat. lib. iii.

§. 55.

Ut ridentibus arrident, ita flentibus adflent
 Humani vultus. si vis me flere, dolendum est
 Primum ipsi tibi: tunc tua me infortunia laedent,
 Telephe, vel Peleu: male si mandata loqueris,
 Aut dormitabo, aut ridebo: tristitia moestum
 Vultum verba decent —

Hor. de Ar. Poet. v. 101.

We must not judge so unfavourably of eloquence as to reckon it only a frivolous art that a declaimer uses to impose upon the weak imagination of the multitude, and to serve his own ends. it is a very serious art; designed to instruct people; suppress their passions; and reform their manners; to support the laws; direct public councils; and to make men good and happy. the more pains an haranguer takes to dazzle me, by the artifices of his discourse, the more I should despise his vanity. his eagerness to display his wit would in my judgment render him unworthy of the least admiration. I love a serious preacher, who speaks for my sake; and not for his own; who seeks my salvation, and not his own vain-glory. he best deserves to be heard who uses speech only to cloath his thoughts; and his thoughts only to promote truth and virtue. nothing is more despicable than a professed declaimer, who retails his discourses, as a quack does his medicines.

I am willing this point should be determined by the very heathens. Plato would not permit in his republic such effeminate notes of music as the Lydians used. the Lacedemonians excluded from theirs all instruments that were too compounded; lest they should soften the people's temper. such harmony as serves

merely to please the ear, is an amusement fit only for soft and idle persons; and is unworthy of a well-ordered commonwealth. it is no farther valuable than the sounds agree to the sense of the words; and the words inspire virtuous sentiments. painting, sculpture, and other elegant arts, ought to have the same end. this ought undoubtedly to be the design of eloquence too. pleasure ought to be mixt with it only to serve as a counter-poise to men's vicious passions; and to render virtue amiable.

I would have an orator prepare himself a long time by general study, to acquire a large stock of knowledge; and to qualify himself for composing well: that so he might need the less preparation for each particular discourse. I would have him naturally a man of good-sense; and to reduce all he says to * good-sense as the standard of his discourse. his studies should be solid: he should apply himself to reason justly; and industriously avoid all subtil and over-refined notions. he should distrust his imagination; and not let it influence his judgment. he should ground every discourse upon some evident principle; and from that draw the most obvious and natural consequences.

Scribendi recte sapere est et principium et fons:

Rem tibi Socraticae poterunt ostendere chartae:

Verbaque provisam rem non invita sequentur.

* Caeterarum artium studia fere reconditis, atque abditis e fontibus hauriuntur: dicendi autem omnis ratio in medio posita, communi quodam in usu, atque in hominum more et sermone versatur: ut in caeteris id maxime excel-

lat, quod longissime sit ab imperitorum intelligentia sensuque disjunctum: in dicendo autem vitium vel maximum est, a vulgari genere orationis, atque a consuetudine communis sensus abhorrere.

Cicero de Orat. lib. i. §. 3.

Qui didicit patriae, quid debeat, et quid amicis,
Quo sit amore parens, quo frater amandus et hospes:

————— ille profecto

Reddere personae scit convenientia cuique.

Hor. de Ar. Poet. v. 309.

Generally speaking, a florid declaimer knows neither the principles of sound philosophy, nor those of the Christian doctrine, for perfecting the manners of men. he minds nothing but bright expressions, and ingenious turns. what he chiefly wants is solid knowledge. he can talk handsomely without knowing what he ought to say. he weakens the most important truths by his vain and elaborate turns of fancy, or expression.

On the contrary, the true orator † adorns his discourse only with bright truths, noble sentiments, and such strong expressions as are adapted to his subject, and to the passions he would excite. he thinks; he feels; and his words flow naturally from him. ‘he does not depend on words (says St. Austin) but ‘they on him.’ a man that has a great and active soul, with a natural easiness of speech, improved by practice, needs never fear the want of expressions. his most ordinary discourses will have exquisite strokes of oratory that the florid haranguers can never imitate. he is not a slave to ‡ words; but closely pur-

† Sed ornatus (repetam enim) virilis, fortis et sanctus sit: nec effoeminatam laevitatem, nec fucō eminentem colorem amet; sanguine et viribus niteat.

Quint. lib. viii. c. 3.

‡ Propterea non debet quisquam ubi maxima rerum momenta versantur, de verbis esse sollicitus.

Idem. ib.

fues the truth. he knows that vehemence is as it were
 the soul of eloquence. he first lays down the principle
 which must serve to clear the subject he treats of. he
 sets this principle in the fullest light. he turns it every
 way to give his slowest hearers a clear view of it. he
 draws the remotest consequences from it by a concise
 and obvious train of reasoning. every truth is set in
 its proper place with regard to the whole: it prepares,
 leads on, and supports, another truth that needed its
 assistance. this just order prevents the trouble of need-
 less repetitions. but it retrenches none of those useful
 ones, that serve to direct the hearer's attention fre-
 quently to that chief point on which the whole de-
 pends. the orator must often shew him the conclusion
 that is contained in the principle: and from this prin-
 ciple, as from the center, he must spread a due light
 over all the parts of the discourse: as a skilful painter
 places the light so in his picture, as from one single
 point to distribute a due proportion of it to every fi-
 gure. the whole discourse is one; and may be reduced
 to one single proposition, set in the strongest light, by
 various views and explications of it. this unity of de-
 sign shews the whole performance at one view: as in the
 public places of a city, one may see all the streets and
 gates of it, when the streets are straight, equal, and duly
 proportioned. the discourse is the proposition unfold-
 ed: and the proposition is an abstract of the discourse.

Denique sit quodvis simplex duntaxat et unum.

Hor. de Ar. Poet. v. 23.

He who perceives not the beauty and force of this
 unity and order, has never seen any thing in its full

light. he has only seen shadows in Plato's cavern. what should we say of an architect who could see no difference between a stately palace, whose apartments are adjusted with the exactest proportion, so as to make one uniform structure; and a confused heap of little buildings which do not compose one regular plan, tho' they be all placed together? what comparison is there betwixt the Colisaeum, and a confused multitude of irregular houses in a city? there can be no true unity in any composition, unless there can be nothing taken from it without spoiling it. it never has a right order but when we cannot displace any part without weakening, obscuring, and disordering the whole. this is what Horace explains perfectly well.

——cui lecta potenter erit res

Nec facundia deferet hunc, nec lucidus ordo.

Ordinis haec virtus erit, et Venus, aut ego fallor

Ut jam nunc dicat, jam nunc debentia dici

Pleraque differat, et praesens in tempus omittat.

De Ar. Poet.——

An author who does not thus methodize his discourse is not fully master of his subject: he has but an imperfect taste, and a low genius. order indeed is an excellence we seldom meet with in the productions of the mind. a discourse is perfect when it has at once method, propriety, strength, and vehemence. but in order to this, the orator must have viewed, examined, and comprehended every point, that he may range each word in its † proper place. this is what an igno-

† It is an infallible proof of | the want of just integrity in eve-

rant declaimer, who is guided by his imagination, can never discern.

Isocrates is smooth, insinuating, and elegant: but can we compare him to Homer? I will go farther; and am not afraid to say that I think Demosthenes a † greater orator than Cicero. I protest there is no man admires Cicero more than I do. he embellishes every thing he handles. he is an honour to speech: and makes that happy use of words that no one else could. he has a vast variety of wit. he is even concise and vehement when he designs to be so against Catiline, Verres, and Antony: but we may perceive some finery in his discourses. his art is wonderful: but still we discern it. while he is concerned for the safety of the republic, he does not forget that he is an orator; nor

ry writing, from the Epopeia, or heroic poem, down to the familiar epistle, or slightest essay either in verse or prose, if every several part or portion fits not its proper place so exactly, that the least transposition would be impracticable— if there be any passage in the middle, or end, which might have stood in the beginning; or any in the beginning, which might have stood as well in the middle or end; there is properly in such a piece, neither beginning, middle, or end: it is a mere rhapsody, not a work. and the more it assumes the air or appearance of a real work, the more ridiculous it becomes.

Characteristicks, vol. iii. p. 259, 260.

† Quorum ego virtutes ple-
raque arbitror similes, consi-

lium, ordinem dividendi, prae-
parandi, probandi rationem;
omnia denique, quae sunt in-
ventionis. in eloquendo est a-
liqua diversitas; densior ille,
[Demosthenes;] hic [Cicero]
copiosior: ille concludit ad-
strictius; hic latius pugnat: il-
le acumine semper; hic fre-
quenter et pondere: illi nihil
detrahi potest; huic nihil ad-
jici: curae plus in hoc; in illo
naturae — cedendum vero in
hoc quidem, quod ille et prior
fuit, et ex magna parte Cice-
ronem, quantus est, fecit. nam
mihi videtur M. Tullius cum
se totum ad imitationem Grae-
corum contulisset, effinxisse
vim Demosthenis, copiam Pla-
tonis, jucunditatem Isocratis.

Quint. lib. x. c. 1.

does he let others forget it. Demosthenes seems transported, and to have nothing in view but his country. he does not study what is beautiful; but naturally falls into it, without reflecting. he is above admiration. he uses speech, as a modest man does his cloaths only to cover himself. he thunders; he lightens: he is like a torrent that hurrys every thing along with it. we cannot criticize him; for, he is master of our passions. we consider the things he says, and not his words. we lose sight of him: we think of Philip only who usurps every thing. I am charmed with these two orators; but I confess that Tully's prodigious art and magnificent eloquence affects me less than the vehement simplicity of Demosthenes. //

* Art lessens and exposes itself when it is too open. thus Longinus says that † 'Isocrates blundered like

* Sed hoc pati non possumus, et perire artem putamus, nisi appareat: cum desinat ars esse, si apparet.

Quintil. lib. iv. c. 2.

† Ο γὰρ Ἰσοκράτης, ἔκ οἱδ' ὅπως, παρὰ δὲ πρᾶγμα ἔπαθεν — Ο δ' εὐθύς ἐν τῇ εἰσβολῇ [τῷ πανηγυρικῷ] ταῦτα τίθησιν· 'ἐπειδ' οἱ λόγοι τοσαύτην ἔχουσι δύναμιν, ὥσθ' οἷον τ' εἶναι καὶ τὰ μεγάλα ταπεινὰ ποιῆσαι, καὶ τοῖς μικροῖς περιθεῖναι μέγε-

θος, καὶ τὰ παλαιὰ καινῶς εἰπεῖν, καὶ περὶ τῶν νεωσὶ γενημένων ἀρχαίως διελθεῖν. οὐκ ἔνν, φησὶ τις, Ἰσοκράτης, ὅτως μέλλεις καὶ τὰ περὶ Λακεδαιμονίων καὶ Ἀθηναίων ἀναλλάττειν; Σχέδον γὰρ τὸ τῶν λόγων ἐγκώμιον ἀπιστίας τῆς καθ' αὐτὴ τοῖς ἀκῆσσι παρασγέλμα καὶ παροίμιον ἐξέθηκε.

Longinus. §. xxxviii.

‘ a school-boy; — when he began one of his panegyrics in this manner: seeing such is the nature of eloquence that it can make great things appear little, and small things to seem great; that it can represent the oldest things as new; and the newest as old ’ — is it thus, O Isocrates (one might say) that you are going to change all things with regard to the Lacedæmonians, and the Athenians? by this manner of praising eloquence he makes a preamble to caution his hearers against believing any thing he should say.’ in effect it was to declare to the world that orators are only sophists such as Plato’s Gorgias was, and the other declaimers of Greece; who perverted rhetoric to impose on the people.

Since eloquence requires that an orator should be a man of probity, and be esteemed such, if he would expect success in the most common affairs of life: how much greater reason have we to believe this saying of St. Austin concerning those who ought to speak like apostles? ‘ he preaches sublimely whose life is irreproachable.’ what good can we expect from the discourses of a young man without solid knowledge, without experience, without an established character; who makes a diversion of oratory; and perhaps endeavours to raise his fortune by that ministry which obliges us to be poor with Jesus Christ; to bear our cross with him, by self-denial; and to command men’s passions in order to convert them?

Before I conclude this head, I must add a few words concerning the eloquence of the fathers: for, some learned men judge of them too unfavourably. they form a character of it from Tertullian’s harsh metaphors; or some swelling periods of St Cyprian; from some

perplexed passages of St. Ambrose, some over-refined jingling antitheses of St. Austin; or some quibbles of St Chrysologus. but they should consider the corrupted taste of the times in which the fathers lived. Rome began to lose its just taste soon after Augustus' reign. Juvenal is less delicate than Horace. there is a shocking bombast in the stile of Seneca the tragedian, and Lucan. at length Rome intirely declined. solid learning ran low at Athens, and the false refinements of wit prevailed, when St. Basil and St. Gregory Nazianzen went thither. the fathers being trained up under the weak declaimers of their times were led away by the common prejudices; which the wisest men scarce ever resist. it was not thought tolerable then to speak in an easy natural way. the world was in the same condition as to eloquence, that we should be in now, as to dress, if no body dared to appear in a fine cloath, without loading it with the thickest embroidery. according to this fashion, we behoved always to declaim; and never talk easily to an audience. but if we had the patience to examine the works of the fathers, we should find many valuable things in them. St. Cyprian has a grandeur and vehemence that somewhat resembles Demosthenes. in St. Chrysostom we find an exact judgment, noble images, and a solid morality explained in the most obvious agreeable manner. St. Austin is at once sublime and popular. he leads us to the highest notions, by the most familiar turns of expression. he asks questions; he puts questions to himself; he answers them. his discourse is a sort of conversation between him, and his audience. he uses pertinent comparisons to clear every doubt. we see him sometimes condescend to the lowest and coarsest ap-

apprehensions of the people, in order to reclaim them. St. Bernard was a prodigy in an age of the grossest ignorance. we find in his works delicacy, and nobleness, a happy turn; and both tenderness, and vehemence. we are surprized at every thing that is great or beautiful in the writings of the fathers, when we know the times in which they lived. we forgive Montaigne his Gascon expressions; and Marot, his old language: why then may we not overlook in the fathers, the swelling stile of their age, with which they express the most valuable truths, in the liveliest manner.

But I am not here to attempt a work that is reserved for some learned pen. it is enough that I hint in general what may be expected from the author of an excellent rhetoric. he might adorn his works by imitating Cicero's manner of mixing examples and precepts together. 'they who have a penetrating vehement temper (says St. Austin) learn oratory better 'by reading the works of eloquent authors, than by 'studying the rules of art.' one might give an agreeable account of the different characters of orators, their manner, their taste, and their maxims. they ought even to be compared together; to enable the reader to judge of the distinct excellence of each.

§. V. A treatise on poetry seems to be as much wanted as a rhetoric. poetry is a more serious and useful art than common people imagine. religion consecrated it to its own use from the very beginning of the world. before men had a text of divine scripture, the sacred songs they learned by heart preserved the remembrance of the creation, and the tradition of God's wonderful works. nothing can equal the mag-

nificence and transport of the songs of Moses. the book of Job is a poem full of the boldest and most majestic figures. the Song of Solomon gracefully and tenderly expresses the mysterious union of God with the soul of man which becomes his spouse. the psalms will be the admiration and comfort of all ages, and all nations that know the true God. the whole scripture is full of poetry, even in those places, where there is not the least appearance of versification. †

Besides, poetry gave the world its first laws: it softened men's wild and savage tempers: it drew them from the forests where they wandered about; and civilized them: it governed their manners: it formed families and nations: and made them relish the sweets of society: it restored the exercise of reason: it cultivated virtue; and invented polite arts: it animated people's courage for war; and disposed them likewise for the calm enjoyments of peace.

Silvestres homines facer interpretsque deorum
Caedibus et victu foedo deterruit Orpheus;
Dictus ob hoc lenire tygres, rapidosque leones:
Dictus et Amphion, Thebanae conditor arcis
Saxa movere sono testudinis, et prece blanda
Ducere quo vellet. fuit haec sapientia quondam.

Sic honor et nomen divinis vatibus atque
Carminibus venit. post hos insignis Homerus
Tyrtaeusque mares animos in martia bella
Versibus exacuit——

HOR. de Ar. Poet. v. 391.

† See page 115.

Speech animated by lively images, noble figures, the transport of passions, and the charms of harmony, was called the language of the Gods: even the most barbarous nations felt its power.

As poetasters deserve the utmost neglect; so we cannot enough admire and encourage a † true poet, who does not use poetry as a sport of fancy, to gain himself a vain applause; but employs it to inspire men with the love of wisdom, virtue, and religion.

May I not be allowed here to express the concern it gives me when I consider that the perfecting our French versification seems almost impossible. what confirms me in this apprehension, is, that our greatest poets have made many sorry verses. no body has wrote finer ones than Malherbe: but how many has he made that are far below his character? even those of our most

† I must confess there is hardly any where to be found a more insipid race of mortals than those whom we moderns are contented to call poets, for having attained the chiming faculty of a language with an injudicious random use of wit and fancy. but for the man who truly and in a just sense deserves the name of poet, and who as a real master, or architect in the kind can describe both men and manners, and give to an action its just body and proportions, he will be found, if I mistake not, a very different creature. such a poet — forms a whole coherent and proportioned in itself, with due subjection and subordinacy of constituent parts. he notes the boundaries of the passions, and knows

their exact tones and measures; by which he justly represents them; marks the sublime of sentiments and action; and distinguishes the beautiful, from the deformed; the amiable, from the odious. the moral artist who can thus imitate the Creator, and is thus knowing in the inward form and structure of his fellow-creature, will hardly, I presume, be found unknowing in himself, or at a loss in those numbers which make the harmony of a mind. for, knavery is mere dissonance and disproportion. and tho' villains may have strong tones and natural capacities of action; it is impossible that true judgment and ingenuity should reside, where harmony and honesty have no being.

Charact. vol. i. p. 207, 208.

admired poets, who have been most uniform and steady in their composures, have yet wrote several lines that are rugged, obscure, and heavy. by endeavouring to give their thoughts a delicate turn, they sometimes make them unintelligible. they often use forced epithets, to hit the rhyme: so that several of their verses might be struck out, without losing one beauty. this easily appears when we examine their works rigorously.

If I be not mistaken our versification loses more than it gains by † rhyme. it loses much variety, easiness, and harmony. the rhyme that a poet labours after, makes him sometimes lengthen, and enervate his period. he is forced to use two or three useless lines to introduce the rhyme he wants. indeed poets are more ‡ scrupulous about the exactness of their rhymes,

† *But those reverend bards*
[Shakespear, Milton, and others.]
— to their eternal honour have
withal been the first of Europeans
who, since the Gothic model of
poetry, attempted to throw off the
horrid discord of jingling rhyme.
they have asserted antient poetic
liberty, and have happily broken
the ice for those who are to follow
them; and who treading in their
footsteps, may at leisure polish our
language, lead our ear to finer
pleasure, and find out the true
rhythmus and harmonious numbers
which alone can satisfy a just
judgment, and muse-like apprehension.

Characteristicks, vol. i. p.
217, 218.

‡ *But so much are our British*

poets taken up in seeking out that monstrous ornament which we call rhyme, that it is no wonder if other ornaments, and real graces are unthought of. however since in some parts of poetry (especially in the dramatic) we have been so happy as to triumph over this barbarous taste; it is unaccountable that our poets who from this privilege ought to undertake some farther refinements, should remain still upon the same level as before. it is a shame to our authors that in their elegant stile, and metred prose there should not be found a peculiar grace and harmony resulting from a more natural and easy disengagement of their periods, and from a careful avoiding the encounter of the shocking consonants

than the solidity of their thoughts and sentiments, the clearness of their stile, the easiness of their turn, and the nobleness of their expressions. rhyme gives us only the same sounds in the last syllable of each couplet; which is so tiresome and grating to the ear, that we avoid it in prose. this repetition of the same sound is even cloying in great heroic verses, where two masculine terms are always followed by two feminine.

It is true we find more harmony in odes and stanza's, where the rhymes being intermixt have a greater cadence and variety. but our lofty heroic verses, which require the sweetest, most various, and most majestic sounds, have often least of this perfection.

Pindaric verses have oft-times the same intermixture of rhymes, that odes have: and their boundless irregularity leaves the poet room to vary their measure and cadence, as he pleases either to rise, or fall, in his verse. M. de la Fontaine has made an excellent use of this freedom.

However I would not propose to have rhyme quite laid aside: our versification could not subsist without it. our language has not that diversity of long and short syllables, which in the Greek, and the Latin, composed the feet, and the measure of verse. but I am of opinion it would be proper to allow our poets a little more liberty in their rhymes, that they might be more exact in the sense and harmony of their verses.

<i>and jarring sounds, to which our language is so unfortunately subject — even a prose-author who attempts to write politely should endeavour to confine himself within those bounds, which can never,</i>	<i>without breach of harmony, be exceeded in any just metre, or agreeable pronunciation.</i> Charact. vol. iii. p. 263, 4, 5.
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by abating somewhat of the exactness in rhymes, reason and good-sense would be more closely followed. they might the more easily hit what is truly beautiful, great, simple, and natural — this would free our greatest poets from the necessity of using forced turns, stiff epithets, and perplexed conceits.

The example of the Greeks, and Latins, might encourage us to take this liberty. their versification was, beyond all comparison, easier than ours. rhyme alone is more difficult than all their rules together: and yet the Greeks had recourse to their different dialects. besides, both Greeks and Latins had superfluous syllables which they freely added to compleat their verses. Horace took great liberty this way in the versification of his satyrs, his epistles, and even in some odes. why might not we find out some such reliefs; seeing our versification is so cramping, and so apt to allay the fire of a good poet?

The severity of our language in not allowing almost any inversion of phrases still vastly increases the difficulty of making French verse. a poet is forced to put his fancy on the rack in every composition; without the least advantage, or necessity. one would be apt to think that we studied rather what is perplexing, than what is beautiful. for, the placing a syllable right, costs our poets as much thought and pains, as the noblest sentiments, the liveliest painting, or the boldest touches. on the contrary, the antients, by frequent inversions, made the sweetest cadence, variety, and passionate expressions, easy to the poet. inversions were even turned into noble figures; and kept the mind suspended, in expectation of something great. we have an instance of this in Virgil's eighth eclogue:

Pastorum musam, Damonis et Alpheſiboei,
 Immemor herbarum quos eſt mirata juvenca
 Certantes, quorum ſtupeſactae carmine lynceſ,
 Et mutata ſuos requierunt flumina curſus;
 Damonis muſam dicemus, et Alpheſiboei.

Ecl. viii. v. 1-5.

If you take away this inverſion, and place the words according to the grammatical order and conſtruction, you deſtroy all their force, and grace, and harmony. it is this ſuſpention that ſtrikes the reader. how faint and ſcrupulous is our language in this point? dare we imitate this verſe in which every word is placed differently from the grammatical order?

Aret ager, vitio moriens ſitit aeris herba.

When Horace would prepare his readers for ſome great object, he leads them on without ſhewing them whither they are going, or giving them time to breathe:

Qualem miniſtrum fulminis alitem.

Hor. Od. Lib. iv. Od. 3.

I confeſs we muſt not introduce a great number of theſe inverſions into our language all at once: we are not accuſtomed to them: they would ſeem harſh and very obſcure. methinks M. Boileau's pindaric ode is not free from that imperfection. I take the more freedom in making this remark, becauſe in other reſpects I admire the works of that great poet. we ought to chuſe the gentleſt inverſions at firſt, and ſuch as come

nearest to those our language already permits. for instance our whole nation have approved of these:

La se perdent ces noms de maitre de la terre,

Et tombent avec eux d'une chute commune

Tous ceux que leur fortune

Faisoit leurs serviteurs.

Malherbe, Liv. vi.

Ronsard undertook too much at once. by his obscure and bold transpositions he forced our language too much; and made it harsh and confused. he introduced too many compounded words to which the nation had not been accustomed. he spoke French in Greek, in spite of the French themselves. I think he was in the right to open some new way of enriching our language; to give force to our poetry, and to facilitate our versification, which began then to be improved. but in the point of language nothing can be effected without the consent of those for whom we write. we ought never to make two steps at once: but must stop short when we find the multitude do not follow us. singularity is dangerous almost in every thing; and can never be excused in things that depend on custom only.

The shocking freedom of Ronsard led us a little into the opposite extreme. we have so cramped and impoverished our language, that it dares never proceed otherwise than according to the most scrupulous and uniform method of grammar. a nominative substantive appears first, leading in its adjective as it were by the hand: its verb constantly follows it, attended with

an adverb that admits of nothing between them: and the rule next requires an accusative which must always keep its place. this excludes all suspension of mind, all expectation, surprize, variety; and oft-times all noble cadence.

On the other hand I grant that we ought never to run the hazard of ambiguity. I would even have † Quintilian's rule generally observed, so as to avoid such expressions as the reader may indeed understand; but which he could not understand, if he did not supply something that they want. we should use ‡ a simple, exact, easy stile, that lays every thing open to the reader, and even prevents his attention. when an author writes for the public, he should take all the pains imaginable to prevent his reader's having any. all the labour should be his own: and he should leave nothing but pleasure and instruction to his readers. they should never be put to the trouble of finding out his meaning. none but those who deal in riddles are allowed to puzzle people. Augustus would rather have frequent repetitions used, than that there should be the least degree of obscurity in a discourse. indeed the first care of one that writes only to be understood, is to ease his readers by expressing himself clearly.

It must be owned that our greatest French poets, being cramped by the strict rules of our versification, sometimes fail in this point of entire perspicuity. he who thinks much, has much to say; and is unwilling

† Quare non ut intelligere possit, sed ne omnino possit non intelligere curandum.

Instit. lib. viii. c. 2.

‡ Nobis prima sit virtus perspicuitas, propria verba,

rectus ordo, non in longum dilata conclusio: nihil neque desit, neque superfluat. ita sermo et doctis probabilis, et planus imperitis erit.

Quint. Instit. lib. viii. c. 2.

to lose any thing: he sets a value on all the fruits of his invention; and labours hard to crowd various thoughts into the narrow compass of a verse. he affects too great delicacy: and this degenerates into forced, far-fetched conceits. he endeavours to dazzle and surprize his readers, to convince them that he has more wit than they; and to gain their admiration. whereas he should never discover more wit than they have; but encrease and quicken theirs, without displaying his own. an author is not satisfied with plain reason, native graces, and lively sentiments which are the true perfection of a discourse: self-love makes him over-shoot the mark. he uses no moderation in studying what is beautiful; and knows not how to check his fancy by avoiding gaudy superfluous ornaments. according to the Italian proverb, 'he loses what is 'good by aiming at better.' he runs into the fault of throwing too much salt and wit into his composures; and giving too high a goût to what he seasons. he imitates those who load a suit with too much embroidery. they who have a just taste avoid excess in every thing; even in wit itself. wit grows tiresome when it is affected, and lavishly used. he shews most wit who knows when to check its sallies, that he may adapt himself to people's capacities, and smooth the way for them. those poets who have the most soaring genius, and the greatest reach of thought and invention should particularly guard themselves against such an excess of wit. they will say perhaps that it is a beautiful failing, a noble, and very uncommon one. I own it is so: but it is a real failing, and one of the most difficult to be corrected. Horace would have an author rigorously strict in criticizing his own works.

Vir bonus et prudens versus reprehendet inertes;
 Culpabit duros; incommittis allinet atrum
 Transverso calamo signum; ambitiosa recidet
 Ornamenta; parum claris lucem dare coget.
 Arguet ambigue dictum; mutanda notabit:

Hor. de Ar. Poet. v. 445.

There is much gained by losing all superfluous ornaments, and confining ourselves to such beauties as are simple, easy, clear, and seemingly negligent. in poetry, as well as in architecture, all the necessary parts should be turned into natural ornaments. but that which serves merely as an ornament is superfluous: lay it aside; there will be nothing wanting: vanity is the only sufferer by the loss. an author that has too much wit, and will always show it, wearies and exhausts mine. I do not desire so very much. if he shewed less, he would give me time to breathe; and be far more agreeable. he keeps my thoughts too much upon the stretch: the reading of his verses becomes a mere study. so many flashes dazzle me. I love a gentle light that refreshes my weak eyes. I chuse an agreeable poet that adapts himself to common capacities: who does every thing for their sakes; and nothing for his own. I would have a sublime so familiar, so sweet, and so simple, that at first every reader would be apt to think he could easily have hit on it himself; tho' very few are really capable of it. I prefer what is amiable, to what is surprizing and wonderful. I would have a man that makes me forget he is an author; and seems to converse with me upon the level. I would have him set before my eyes, a labourer who is concerned for his crop; a shepherd that

knows nothing beyond his flock and his village; a nurse tenderly anxious for her infant. I would have him turn my attention, not on himself, but on the shepherds whom he makes to speak.

*Despectus tibi sum; nec qui sim quaeris Alexi:
Quam dives pecoris nivei, quam lactis abundans.
Mille meae Siculis errant in montibus agnae.
Lac mihi non aestate, novum non frigore desit;
Canto quae solitus, si quando armenta vocabat
Amphion Dircaeus in Actaeo Aracyntho.
Nec sum adeo informis, nuper me in littore vidi,
Cum placidum ventis staret mare ———*

Virg. Ecl. ii. v. 18.

How much more beautiful is this rural simplicity than a nice over-strained turn of wit?

*Ex noto fictum carmen sequar; ut sibi quis
Speret idem; fudet multum, frustra que laboret
Ausus idem. tantum series juncturaque pollet,
Tantum de medio sumptis accedit honoris.*

HOR. de Ar. Poet. v. 240.

How truly great is he who stoops thus to his subject, that he may paint every thing to the life; and hit the various characters he draws! how much is he above what we call ingenuity, when he is not afraid of concealing a part of his wit! a work cannot be truly beautiful, unless the author keep himself out of sight, and let me forget him. he must leave me alone in full liberty. for instance Virgil disappears; and I fancy that I see this pleasant abode.

Muscoli fontes, et somno mollior herba.

Ecl. vii. v. 45.

I cannot help wishing I were in this other place ;

— ô mihi tum quam molliter ossa quiescant,
Vestra meos olim si fistula dicat amores!
Atque utinam ex vobis unus, vestrique fuisset
Aut custos gregis, aut maturae vinitor uvae!
Hic gelidi fontes, hic mollia prata, Lycori
Hic nemus ———

Virg. Ecl. x. v. 33.

I almost envy the happiness of those who live in that delightful spot which Horace describes;

Qua pinus ingens, albaque populus
Umbram hospitalem consociare amant
Ramis, et obliquo laborat
Lympha fugax trepidare rivo:

Car. L. II. Od. iii. v. 9.

I am far more pleased with this shade and this stream, than with an impertinent wit that does not let me rest. the charms of these authors never decay. they are so far from pleasing less upon a review, that every reading discloses new beauties. the perusal of them is not a study: it rather calms and unbends our thoughts. bright and over-wrought composures dazzle and delude the fancy: but they have so fine an edge, that it is quickly blunted. I value neither what is difficult, nor uncommon, nor wonderful: the simple, natural, easy beauty hits my taste. if the flowers we tread up-

on in a meadow be as pretty as those in the finest garden; I love them better. I do not grudge such enjoyments to any one. Beauty could lose none of its worth, tho' it were common to all mankind: it would rather be the more excellent. scarcity is a defect, and a want in nature. the rays of the sun are not a less valuable treasure for shining upon all the universe. I love a beauty so natural that it should not need the advantage of novelty to surpriseme. I would have its charms such as never to fade, but always to allure and delight me:

———— decies repetita placebunt.

HOR. de Ar. Poet.

Poetry is certainly an imitation of nature, and a sort of painting. let us suppose then that Raphael were busy about a picture; he would avoid drawing whimsical figures, unless he were working on grotesque. he would not use too bright colouring: he would be so far from desiring his art should be obvious to the eye, that he would do all he can to conceal it. he endeavoured to deceive the spectator, and to make him fancy that his picture is Christ himself transfigured upon the mount Tabor. it is truth alone that gives a value to his painting. art is defective when it overdoes: it should always aim at an exact likeness. since it is delightful in one of Titian's country-pieces to see the goats climbing up a hanging rock; or to observe a country-feast and rustic dances, in one of Taisniere's pictures; it is no wonder that we are pleased with such natural descriptions of human life, as we find in the Odyssey. we fancy ourselves to be in those places that Homer describes; and that we see and hear people there. this

simplicity of manners seems to bring back the golden age. I am more pleased with honest Eumeus, than with any hero of Clelia, or Cleopatra. the foolish prejudices of the present age, make us undervalue such beauties. but our follies cannot lessen the true worth of such a simple rational life. unhappy are they who do not feel the charms of these verses;

Fortunate senex, hic inter flumina nota,
Et fontes sacros, frigus captabis opacum:
VIRG. Ecl. i. v. 52.

Nothing can go beyond this description of a country life;

O fortunatos nimium sua si bona nōrint
Agricolas! quibus ipsa, procul discordibus armis,
Fundit humo facilem victum justissima tellus.

At secura quies, et nescia fallere vita,
Dives opum variarum; ac latis otia fundis,
Speluncae, vivique lacus; —
V. Georg. ii. v. 458.

every part of it pleases me: even this place which is so remote from Romantic notions;

————— at frigida Tempe
Mugitusque boum, mollesque sub arbore somni
Non absunt. Ibid. v. 469.—

In the same manner am I delighted with Horace's solitude:

O rus, quando ego te aspiciam? quandoque licebit,
Nunc veterum libris, nunc somno et inertibus horis
Ducere sollicitae jucunda oblivio vitae?

Satyr. L. II. S. vi. 60.—

The antients did not think it enough to copy nature exactly: their pictures were moving, as well as true.

Homer never paints a youth going to fall in battle, without giving him some affecting charms. he represents him full of valour, and virtue: he raises your love and concern for him: he makes you dread the danger that threatens him. he shews you his father oppressed with age, and alarmed at the danger of his dear son. he shews you his new married spouse trembling for him; and you tremble with her: the poet ensnares your passions. his design in affecting you with so much beauty and sweetness is only to prepare you for the fatal moment wherein you suddenly see the man you love so much, weltering in his blood, and his eyes closed in an eternal night.

Virgil took as much care to raise our concern for Pallas, Evander's son, as Homer did to make us lament Patroclus. we are pleased with the grief we feel for Nisus, and Euryalus. I have seen a young prince, but eight years old, struck with sorrow at the sight of little * Joash's danger; and vexed at the high-priest's concealing his name, and royal birth from him. I have seen him weep bitterly at hearing these verses;

Ah miseram Eurydicen, animâ fugiente vocabat:
Eurydicen toto referebant flumine ripae.

VIRG. Georg. iv. v. 526.

* 2. Kings. xi. 2.

Was ever any thing more happily contrived, or fitter to raise a lively sentiment than this dream of Aeneas?

Tempus erat, quo prima quies mortalibus aegris
Incipit, et dono Divûm gratissima serpit.

In somnis, ecce, ante oculos moestissimus Hector
Visus adesse mihi, —————

Raptatus bigis, ut quondam, aterque cruento
Pulvere, perque pedes trajectus lora tumentes.
Hei mihi, qualis erat! quantum mutatus ab illo
Hectore, qui redit exuvias indutus Achillei.

Virg. Aen. ii. v. 268.

Ille nihil: nec me quaerentem vana moratur:
Heu fuge, nate Dea, teque his, ait, eripe flammis:
Hostis habet muros: ruit alto a culmine Troja.
Sat patriae, Priamoque datum ———
Sacra suosque tibi commendat Troja penates:
Hos cape fatorum comites —————

Ib. v. 287.

Could wit move the heart in this manner? can one read the following passage without being touched?

O mihi sola mei super Astryanaëtis imago!
Sic oculos, sic ille manus, sic ora ferebat;
Et nunc aequali tecum pubesceret aevo.

Virg. Aen. L. iii. v. 489.

Turns of wit would be very unseasonable, and even shocking, in such a tender passage: where grief alone could be allowed to speak.

The poet never mentions the death of any person

without describing some peculiar circumstance that must affect the reader. we are grieved for distressed virtue, when we read this passage;

—— cedit et Ripheus, justissimus unus
Qui fuit in Teucris, et servantissimus aequi.
Dis aliter visum ——

Aen. L. ii. v. 426.

We fancy ourselves in the midst of Troy seized with horror and compassion when we read these lines:

Tum pavidæ tectis matres ingentibus errant,
Amplexæque tenent postes, atque oscula figunt:

Vidi Hecubam, centumque nurus, Priamumque per
(aras
Sanguine foedantem, quos ipse sacraverat, ignes.

Arma diu senior defueta trementibus aevo
Circumdat nequicquam humeris, et inutile ferrum
Cingitur, ac densos fertur moriturus in hostes.

Sic fatus senior: telumque imbelli sine ictu
Conjecit ——

Aen. L. ii. v. 489, 501, 509, 544.

Nunc morere. hæc dicens, altaria ad ipsa trementem
Traxit, et in multo lapsantem sanguine nati:
Implicuitque comam laevâ, dextraque coruscum
Extulit, ac lateri capulo tenus abdidit ensẽ.
Hæc finis Priami fatorum: hic exitus illum
Sorte tulit, Trojam incensam, et prolapsa videntem

Pergama; tot quondam populis terrisque superbum
 Regnatorem Asiae: jacet ingens littore truncus
 Avulsumque humeris caput, et sine nomine corpus.
 At me tum primum saevus circum stetit horror:
 Obstupui —————

Respicio, et quae sit me circum copia lustro.
 Deferuere omnes defessi, et corpora saltu
 Ad terram misere, aut ignibus aegra dedere.

Virg. Aen. L. ii. v. 550, 564.

The poet does not represent Euridice's misfortune, without shewing her just ready once more to view the light; and in a moment plunged again into the infernal gloomy shades.

Jamque pedum referens, casus evaserat omnes;
 Redditaque Euridice superas veniebat ad auras;

Illa, quis et me, inquit, miseram, et te perdidit Or-
 (pheu?

Quis tantus furor? en iterum crudelia retro
 Fata vocant, conditque natantia lumina somnus.
 Jamque vale. feror ingenti circumdata nocte,
 Invalidasque tibi tendens, heu! non tua, palmas.

Georg. L. iv. v. 485, 6, 494.

We sympathize even with those wretched cattle that the poet sets before our eyes:

Propter aquae rivum viridi procumbit in ulva
 Perdita, nec ferae meminit decedere nocti:

Ecl. viii. v. 87.

The pestilence raging among them makes a very moving picture:

Hinc laetis vituli vulgo moriuntur in herbis;
Et dulces animas plena ad praesepia reddunt.

Labitur infelix studiorum, atque immemor herbae
Victor equus; fontesque avertitur, et pede terram
Crebra ferit —————

Ecce autem duro fumans sub vomere taurus
Concidit, et mixtum spumis vomit ore cruorem,
Extremosque ciet gemitus: it tristis arator
Moerentem abjungens fraterna morte juvenum;
Atque opere in medio defixa relinquit aratra.
Non umbrae aliorum nemorum, non mollia possunt
Prata movere animum; non qui per saxa volutus
Purior electro campum petit amnis: at imà
Solvuntur latera: atque oculos stupor urget inertes:
Ad terramque fluit devexo pondere cervix.

Georg. L. iii. v. 494, 498, 515.

This poet gives life and passion to every object. in his verses every thing thinks, and feels: the very trees move you.

Exiit ad coelum ramis felicibus arbos,
Miraturque novas frondes, et non sua poma.

Georg. L. ii. v. 81, 2.

A flower raises your pity when Virgil paints it just drooping.

Purpureus veluti cum flos succisus aratro
 Languescit moriens.

Aen. L. ix. v. 435.

You think that you see the smallest plants that the
 spring revives, and adorns:

Inque novos soles audent se gramina tutò
 Credere —————

Geor. L. ii. v. 332.

A nightingale is Philomela moving your compassi-
 on for her misfortunes;

Qualis populeâ moerens philomela sub umbrâ
 Amissos queritur foetus, quos durus arator
 Observans nido implumes detraxit: at illa
 Flet noctem, ramoque sedens miserabile carmen
 Integrat, et moestis late loca questibus implet.

Geor. L. iv. v. 511.

Horace in three verses draws a picture in which eve-
 ry thing is lively and affecting.

————— fugit retro
 Levis juvenas et decor, aridâ
 Pellente lascivos amores
 Canitie, facilemque somnum.

Carm. Lib. ii. Od. xi. v. 5.

Would he with two strokes of his pencil draw two
 men whom every-body must know at first sight? he sets

before your eyes the incorrigible folly of Paris, and the implacable rage of Achilles.

Quid Paris? ut salvus regnet, vivatque beatus,
Cogi posse negat —————

Ep. L. i. Ep. ii. v. 10.

Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer;
Jura neget sibi nata, nihil non arroget armis.

De Ar. Poet. v. 121.

Would he make us in love with the place where he wished to end his days with his friend? he makes us long to go thither.

Ille terrarum mihi praeter omnes
Angulus ridet —————

ibi tu calentem

Debita sparges lachrymâ favillam
Vatis amici.

Carm. Lib. ii. Od. vi.

Does he give us the character of Ulysses? he represents him as above the reach of storms, and shipwreck, and the greatest calamities.

————— aspera multa
Pertulit, adversis rerum immerfabilis undis.

Ep. L. i. Ep. ii. v. 21.

Does he describe Rome invincible, even under her misfortunes? hear him:

Duris ut ilex tonsa bipennibus
 Nigrae feraci frondis in Algido,
 Per damna, per caedes, ab ipso
 Ducit opes animumque ferro.
 Non Hydra secto corpore firmior, &c.

Carm. Lib. iv. Od. iv. 57.

Catullus (whom one cannot name without detesting his obscene verses,) hit the perfection of a tender simplicity.

Odi, et amo: quare id faciam fortasse requiris.
 Nescio; sed fieri sentio, et excrucior.

Epigr. 86.

How much are the elaborate witty conceits of Ovid and Martial inferiour to these negligent words; where the distracted heart alone speaks in a kind of despair?

What can be more simple, and more moving than King Priam's being reduced in his old age to kiss the murdering hands of Achilles * who had destroyed his children. he begs of him the great Hector's body, as the only alleviation of his misery. he must have spoiled all if he had given the least ornament to his words: therefore they express nothing but his grief. he con-jured him by his own father who sunk under old-age, to have pity upon the most wretched of all fathers.

Wit has the misfortune to weaken those strong passions it pretends to adorn. according to Horace, a poem is not to be valued much for being bright and fine, unless it be likewise moving, delightful, and consequently, simple, natural, and full of passion:

* *Iliad*. lib. xxiv.

Non satis est pulchra esse poemata, dulcia sunto,
Et quocunque volent animum auditoris agunto.

De Ar. Poet. v. 99.

That which is only beautiful, I mean, bright, has but half the beauty it ought to have. * true beauty must express the passions well in order to excite them: it should captivate the mind, and keep its attention steddily fixt on the true † design of a poem.

§. VI. With regard to dramatic poetry, we must

* Even in the arts which are merely imitations of outward grace and beauty, we not only confess a taste; but make it a part of refined breeding to discover, amidst the many false manners, and ill styles, the true and natural one, which represents the real beauty and Venus of the kind. it is the like moral grace and Venus which discovering itself in the turns of character, and the variety of human affections, is copied by the writing artist. if he knows not this Venus, these graces, nor was ever struck with the beauty, the decorum of this inward kind, he can never paint advantageously after the life; nor in a feigned subject, where he has full scope.

Characteristicks, vol. i. p. 336, 7.

† Let poets or the men of harmony, deny, if they can, this force of nature, or withstand this moral magic. they for their parts, carry a double portion of this charm about with them: for, in the first

place, the very passion that inspires them is itself the love of numbers, decency, and proportion; and this too, not in a narrow sense, or after a selfish way, (for who is there that composes for himself?) but in a friendly social view; for the pleasure and good of others; even down to posterity, and future ages. in the next place, it is evident in these performers, that their chief theme and subject, that which raises their genius the most, and by which they so effectually move others, is purely manners, and the moral part. for this is the effect, and this the beauty of their art, in vocal measures of syllables, and sounds, to express the harmony and numbers of an inward kind; and represent the beauties of a human soul by proper fails and contrarities, which serve as graces in this limning, and render this music of the passions more powerful and enchanting.

Charact. vol. i. p. 136. 7.

first distinguish between tragedy, and comedy. the former exhibits such great events as are apt to excite violent passions. the latter only describes the manners of men in a private condition.

As for Tragedy, I must begin with declaring that I wish our poets may never aim at improving any scene that represents such criminal passions as tend to inflame the spectators. I observed before that Plato and other wise legislators among the Heathen excluded from their well-regulated societies all such fables and musical instruments as might unman the people by inclining them to sensuality. how much severity then ought Christian nations to show against all contagious spectacles? so far am I from desiring to have such entertainments improved, that it gives me a sensible pleasure to observe that among us they are very low and imperfect. our poets have made them as luscious and insipid as Romances. the lover talks of nothing but flames, chains, and torments: he is for dying in perfect health. a very homely lady is called a Sun, or an Aurora at least: her eyes are two stars. every expression is extravagant; and there is nothing that discovers a natural passion. it is so much the better: the weakness of the poison lessens the danger. but, methinks, that according to the philosophical notions of antiquity, there might be a wonderful force given to tragedy, without any mixture of that fickle extravagant love which produces so many pernicious effects.

Among the Greeks, tragedy did not in the least depend on wanton love. the Oedipus of Sophocles, for instance, has not the least touch of that passion, which was quite foreign to his subject. the other tragedies of that great poet are composed in the same manner. M.

Corneille in his Oedipus, has only weakened his action, made it double, and divided the spectator's attention, by the Episode of Theseus's insipid passion for Dirce. M. Racine fell into the same inconvenience in his Phaedra. he has made a double action, by joining to the distracted Phaedra, Hippolitus sighing, contrary to his true character. he should have shown Phaedra quite alone in her rage. the action would then have been single, short, lively and vehement. but our two tragic poets, who in other respects deserve the highest praises, were carried away with the stream; and fell in with the Romantic taste that prevailed. the wit then in fashion introduced love in every piece. they thought it impossible to entertain an audience agreeably for two hours without the help of some amorous intrigue. people thought it modish to be impatient at the noblest and most affecting scenes, unless some whining hero came in to interrupt it. his very sighs must be set off with quibbles; and his despair be expressed in a kind of epigram. so far doth the desire of pleasing the vulgar taste constrain our greatest poets to transgress the rules of decorum. hence came this fantastic sort of passion:

* Thou cruel thirst of fame whose noble rage
Drives me to death, to give my mem'ry life;

* Impitoyable soif de gloire,
Dont l'aveugle et noble transport
Me fait precipiter ma mort,
Pour faire vivre ma memoire :
Arrete pour quelques momens
Les impetueux sentimens
De cette inexorable envie ;
Et souffre qu'en ce triste jour

Stop but a moment thy impetuous course;
 And let me still, before I breathe my last
 This wretched day, give one more sigh to love.

the hero dared not die of grief without a quibble or
 turn of wit at expiring.

Hence too comes this swelling florid despair:

† A fatal and an unexpected blow
 Has struck me to the bottom of the heart:
 Wretched avenger of a too just quarrel!
 And wretched object of unjust revenge.

never did real grief speak in such a pompous affected
 strain.

I think it would be proper to rid tragedy of that
 senseless fustian, which has not the least air of proba-
 bility. for example the following lines have some-
 thing in them very extravagant:

† Impatient wishes of a brave revenge,
 Who owe your being to a father's death;

Avant que de donner ma vie
 Je donne un soupir à l'amour.

RACINE.

† Percé jusques au fond du coeur
 D'une atteinte imprévûe aussi-bien que mortelle;
 Misérable vangeur d'une juste querelle!
 Et malheureux objet d'une injuste rigueur.

‡ Impatiens desirs d'une illustre vengeance,
 A qui la mort d'une pere a donné la naissance;
 Enfans impetueux de mon ressentiment,
 Que ma douleur séduite embrasse aveuglement;
 Vous regnez sur mon ame avec trop d'empire,
 Pour les moins souffrez un moment que je respire,

Impetuous children of my just resentment
 Blindly embrac'd by my misguided grief,
 Ye rule my soul with a too absolute sway,
 Let me at least enjoy one moment's ease
 In this my anxious state, that I may weigh
 Both what I hazard, and what I pursue.

M. Boileau observed in these verses a genealogy of impatient wishes of a brave revenge; which were the impetuous children of a just resentment; and were embraced by a misguided grief. the chief persons in a tragedy who speak with passion, ought to express it in a noble lively manner: but the passions always speak naturally, and without such affected turns. people in affliction would not desire to be consoled by their friends, in such pompous affected language.

M. Racine was not free from this defect which custom had made almost necessary. nothing can be less natural than the account of Hippolitus' death at the end of the tragedy of Phaedra; which otherwise has great beauties in it. Theramenes who comes to acquaint Theseus of his son's fatal death, should only have told it in two words; and hardly have had strength to pronounce them distinctly. he should have said, 'Hippolitus is dead—— a monster, which the angry gods sent from the bottom of the sea, devoured him' —— I saw it.' could a man so concerned, frightened, breathless, amuse himself in making a pompous florid description of the sea-monster?

Et que je considere en l'état ou je suis
 Et ce que je hazarde, et ce que je poursuis.

CORNEILLE.

* His melancholy look, and drooping head
Seem'd to express his sad, dejected thoughts:

It mov'd the earth, infected all the air;
The wave that brought it started back with dread.

Sophocles was far from this misplaced elegance, that has not the least shew of probability in it. he makes Oedipus utter broken words that express nothing but sorrow: *ὦ, ὦ; αἶ, αἶ; φεῦ, φεῦ. Ο! Ο! ah! ah! alas! alas!* this cannot be called speaking, but rather groaning, or crying. † ‘*alas alas* (says he) *the truth now appears*

* *L'oeil morne maintenant, et la tête baissée
Sembloient se conformer à sa triste pensée*

*La terre s'en émeut, l'air en est infecté;
Le flot qui l'apporta, recule épouvanté.*

RACINE.

† *ὦ, ὦ· τὰ πάντ' ἄν ἐξίκοι σαφῆ.
Ω φῶς, τελευταῖόν σε προσβλέψαιμι νῦν.*

Αἶ αἶ αἶ αἶ.

*Φεῦ, φεῦ, δύσανος ἐγώ· ποῖ γὰρ
Φέρομαι τλάμων; πᾶ μοι φθογὰ
Διαπέτ' ὀφθαλμῶν;
Ω δαίμον, ἴν' ἐξήλθ;*

————— *οἱ μοι,*

*Οἱ μοι μάλ' αὖθις· οἶον εἰσέδω μ' ἄμα
Κέντρων τε τῶνδ' οἴσθημα, καὶ μνήμη κακῶν.—
Τί δή ποτ' ἐμοὶ βλέπῃς ἢ
Στερκῆν ἢ πρῶτον γόρον*

' too plainly. O light, this is the last time I shall behold
 ' thee—— alas! alas! wretched man! where am I?
 ' whence comes it that my voice so suddenly fails me?
 ' O fortune, whither art thou fled? —— unhappy,
 ' wretched man that I am! I feel a raging anguish whilst
 ' I think of my misfortunes——O friends, what can
 ' I now see or love, or entertain, or hear with com-
 ' fort? O friends, immediately forsake a wretch, an ex-
 ' ecrable wretch, abhorred of gods and men—— cur-
 ' sed be the man that unloosed my fetters, and saved
 ' my life, in the desert where I was exposed. he did
 ' me no real kindness. I might then have dyed with
 ' less sorrow both to myself, and to my friends — I

Ετ' ἔς' ἀκῆεν ἡδονᾶ, φίλοι;
 Απάγετ' ἐκλόπιον ὅτι τάχιστα με,
 Απάλετ' ὦ φίλοι, τὸν ὀλεθρον μέγαν,
 Τὸν καίαραλόταλον, ἔτι δέ γε καὶ
 Θεοῖς ἐχθρόταλον βροτῶν.——

Ολοιθ' ὅσις ἦν ὃς ἀγρίας πέδας
 Επιποδίας μ' ἀπό τε φόνου
 Εἰρύλο κανέσωσεν, ὕδεν εἰς χάριν
 Πράσων· τότε γὰρ ἂν θανὼν
 Οὐκ ἦν φίλοισιν ὕδ' ἐμοὶ τοσόνδ' ἄχος.

Οὔκην παλρός γ' ἂν φονδὺς
 Ηλθον, ὕδ' ἐνυμφίος
 Βροτοῖς ἐκλήθην ὦν ἔφυν ἄπο.
 Νῦν δ' ἄθλιος μέν εἰμ', ἀνοσίων δὲ παῖς,
 Ομογῆμης δ' ἀφ' ὧναυτός γ' ἔφυν τάλας.

Sophoc. Oedip.

‘ should neither have become my father’s murderer,
 ‘ nor my mother’s husband. now I am reduced to
 ‘ the greatest misery. I have polluted my own pa-
 ‘ rents! I have had children by her that brought me
 ‘ into the world!

Thus it is that nature speaks, when oppressed with grief: nothing can be more remote from the sparkling expressions of a wit. Sophocles likewise makes Hercules and Philoctetes express their sorrow in the same lively artless manner.

M. Racine, who had carefully studied the great models of antiquity, had formed the plan of a French tragedy of Oedipus according to the manner of Sophocles, and the true Greek simplicity, without mixing any impertinent intrigue of love in it. such a piece might have been very curious, lively, vehement, and affecting. it would not indeed be applauded; but it would move an audience, and make them weep: it would keep them continually attentive: it would inspire them with the love of virtue, and a detestation of vice: it would serve to promote the observance of the best laws. persons of the strictest piety could not be offended at it. nothing need be retrenched from it but those false ornaments that are contrary to all rules.

Our rigorous rules of versification often oblige the best tragic poets to fill their verses with useless epithets, for the sake of rhyme. nay to one good line, they sometimes add another silly one that spoils it. for instance, I am charmed when I read these words in Corneille’s Horatii

————— he might dy:

but I cannot bear the next line that is brought only for the rhyme ;

Or gain, through brave despair, the victory.

The excessive circumlocutions in our verses have nothing in them that is natural. they do not represent men talking together in a serious, noble, vehement manner. the spectator loses the greatest pleasure of the entertainment, when it has not this air of probability. I confess the antients allowed of a * lofty stile in tragedy ;

An tragica defaevit, et ampullatur in arte.

Hor. Ep.

but still it ought to be a true imitation of nature. it may be allowed to paint in a noble, beautiful manner: but on all occasions men ought to speak in an easy na-

* Now according to this natural growth of arts, peculiar to Greece, it would necessarily happen, that at the beginning when the force of language came to be first proved ; when the admiring world made their first judgment, and essayed their taste in the elegancies of this sort ; the lofty, the sublime, the astonishing and amazing would be the most in fashion, and preferred. metaphorical speech, multiplicity of figures, and high-sounding words would naturally prevail—but the taste of Greece was now polishing. a better judgment was soon formed, when a

Demosthenes was heard, and had found success. the people themselves—came now to reform their comedy and familiar manner, after tragedy and the higher stile had been brought to its perfection under the last hand of an Euripides. and now in all the principal works of ingenuity and art, simplicity and nature began chiefly to be sought : and this was the taste which lasted through so many ages, till the ruin of all things under an universal monarchy.

Charact. vol. iii. p. 140,

141.

tural way. a hero must appear most ridiculous, if in the greatest actions of his life, he does not speak not only with a noble force, but such an easy simplicity as is directly opposite to bombast:

Projecit ampullas et sesquipedalia verba.

Hor. de Ar. Poet. v. 97.

it is enough that the poet makes Agamemnon talk haughtily; Achilles, in anger; Ulysses, with wisdom; and Medea, in fury. but the pompous extravagant way of ranting spoils every thing. the greater those characters are, and the stronger those passions which the poet represents, the more necessary it is, to draw them with a † noble and vehement simplicity.

Methinks our poets have made the Romans talk in a too lofty strain. for, tho' they thought nobly; they talked with moderation. they were indeed a kingly people;

————— populum late regem

Virg. Aen. L. i. v. 25.

† In poetry and studied prose, the astonishing part, or what commonly passes for sublime, is formed by the variety of figures, the multiplicity of metaphors, and by quitting as much as possible the natural and easy way of expression, for that which is most unlike to humanity, or ordinary use. this the prince of critics assures us to have been the manner of the earliest poets before the age of Homer; or till such time as this fa-

ther-poet came into repute, who deposed that spurious race, and gave rise to a legitimate and genuine kind. he retained only what was decent of the figurative or metaphoric stile, introduced the natural, and simple, and turned his thoughts toward the real beauty of composition the unity of design, the truth of characters, and the just imitation of nature in each particular.

Charact. vol. i. p. 242, 3.

but still they were as mild in their intercourse and expressions, as they were vigorous in conquering those nations that were jealous of their power:

Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos.

Aen. L. vi. v. 853.

Horace has given the same character of them in other words:

*Imperet bellante prior, jacentem
Lenis in hostem.*

Carm. Secul. v. 51, 2.

The stateliness with which Augustus is made to speak in the tragedy of Cinna, is scarce consistent with that modest simplicity which Sueton ascribes to him, in all the particulars of his conduct. he still preserved in Rome so great an appearance of the antient liberty of the republic, that he would not suffer the people to call him, Lord. * ‘ both by his aspect, and his ges-

* *Manu, vultuque indecoras adulationes repressit, et in sequenti die gravissimo corripuit edicto; dominumque se posthac appellari ne a liberis, aut nepotibus, vel serio, vel joco passus est— in consulatu pedibus fere, extra consulatum saepe adoperta sella per publicum incessit. promiscuis salutationibus admittebat et plebem—quoties magistratum comitiis interesset, tribus cum candidatis suis circumibat, supplicabatque more solemn. fe-*

rebat et ipse suffragium in tribu, ut unus e populo—filiam et neptesita instituit, ut etiam lanificio assuefaceret—habitavit in aedibus modicis Hortensianis neque laxitate, neque cultu conspicuis; ut in quibus porticus breves essent;— et sine marmore ullo, aut insigni pavimento conspicuae: ac per annos amplius xl. eodem cubiculo hieme et aestate mansit— instrumenti ejus et supellectilis parsimonia apparet etiam nunc residuis lectis atque

' ture, (says Sueton) he discouraged the unmanly flat-
 ' teries that were addressed to him; and the next day
 ' he suppressed them by a most severe edict. nor would
 ' he ever afterwards suffer himself to be called Lord,
 ' not even by his children, and his other relations, ei-
 ' ther in jest, or in earnest — during his consulship
 ' he generally walked abroad; and at other times he
 ' was often carryed in a close chair. he allowed the
 ' common people as well as others to converse with
 ' him — when he assisted at the election of magis-
 ' trates, he went round the tribes with his candidates;
 ' and solicited for them in the usual form: and he
 ' himself voted in his tribe, as one of the people —
 ' he so educated his daughter and grand-daughters, that
 ' they were accustomed even to spinning of wool—he
 ' dwelt in the ordinary Hortensian buildings, which
 ' are not conspicuous either for spaciousness, or or-
 ' nament: the portico's being but short — and not
 ' adorned with marble or costly pavement. he lodged
 ' in the same chamber both in summer and winter, for
 ' upwards of forty years — the plainness of his fur-
 ' niture appears from some of his beds and tables, still
 ' remaining; most of which are scarce commonly hand-
 ' some—he supped on three dishes, or (on extraor-
 ' dinary occasions) upon six at most: and then his en-
 ' tertainments were not sumptuous, but always frank
 ' — he seldom wore any other cloaths than were

mensis, quorum pleraque vix
 privatae elegantiae sint—coe-
 nam tribus ferculis, aut cum
 abundantissime, senis praebe-
 bat; ut non nimio sumptu, ita
 summa comitate—veste non

temere alia quam domestica
 usus est ab uxore confecta —
 —cibi minimi erat atque vul-
 garis fere —

Suet. Vita Aug.

‘ manufactured by his wife——his diet was sparing;
 ‘ and generally plain——

Pomp and bombast are more suitable to the pride of a Persian monarch than to the civility that was peculiar to the Romans. notwithstanding the severity of Tiberius, and the servile flattery into which they fell in his days, and under his successors; Pliny tells us that Trajan lived still like a good sociable citizen, with an amiable familiarity. this emperor’s answers are short, exact, and void of all pomp. the Basso relievo of his antient pillar at Rome represents him always in the most modest posture; even when he is at the head of his legions. every thing we read in Livy, Plutarch, Tully, or Sueton, represent the Romans as a people that were haughty in their sentiments; but very plain, natural and modest in their language. they did not in the least resemble the stiff blustering heroes in our romances. a great man does not declaim like an actor. in conversation he speaks in strong and proper terms: he says nothing that is mean; nor any thing that is pompous and affected:

Ne quicunque Deus, quicunque adhibebitur Heros,
 Regali conspectus in auro nuper et ostro,
 Migret in obscuras humili sermone tabernas;
 Aut, dum vitat humum, nubes et inania captet.

Hor. de Ar. Poet. v. 227.

The nobleness of the tragic stile should not hinder even heroes from speaking with simplicity, according to the nature of the things they talk of.

Et tragicus plerumque dolet sermone pedestri.

§. VII. Comedy is inferior to tragedy; and describes the manners of men in a private condition: therefore it requires a more familiar strain. but some men show a haughty temper in the lowest circumstances, as well as in the highest.

Iratusque Chremes tumido delitigat ore.

Hor. de Ar. Poet. v. 94.

I confess that I think the strokes of pleasantry in Aristophanes are very low; and resemble the modern Farce, which is purposely designed to amuse and gratify the mob. what can be more ridiculous than his description of a Persian king travelling with forty thousand men, to a golden mountain, merely to satisfy the infirmities of nature?

There is a great respect due to antiquity: but the antients themselves allow us to judge freely of their works. Horace teaches me how to judge of Plautus:

*At nostri proavi Plautinos et numeros, et
Laudavere sales; nimium patienter utrumque,
Ne dicam stulte, mirati: si modo ego, et vos:
Scimus inurbanum lepido seponere dicto.*

Hor. de Ar. Poet. v. 270.

Could it be the low humour of Plautus that Caesar meant by the *Vis Comica* that he wished Terence to have had? Menander had given this latter poet a just and delicate taste. Scipio and Laelius, Terence's friends, nicely distinguished in his favour, between that humour which Horace calls *Lepidum*: and what is *Inurbanum*. that comic poet has an inimitable sim-

plicity that charms and moves us by the bare recital of a very common incident.

Sic cogitabam; hic parvae consuetudinis
Causa, mortem hujus tam fert familiariter:
Quid si amasset? quid mihi hic faciet patri?—
Effertur. imus, &c.

Ter. Andr. Act. i. Sc. 1.

Nothing can be more exactly managed; so as not to overdo any character. what follows is tender:

————— at at, hoc illud est,
Hinc illae lachrymae; haec illa est misericordia.

Ibid.

Here is another passage in which passion alone speaks:

Memor essem? ô Myfis, Myfis, etiam nunc mihi
Scripta illa dicta sunt in animo Chrysidis
De Glycerio. jam ferme moriens me vocat;
Accessi: vos semotae: nos soli: incipit:
Mi Pamphile, hujus formam atque aetatem vides;
Quod ego te per hanc dextram oro, et ingenium tuum,
Per tuam fidem, perque hujus solitudinem
Te obtestor —————
Te isti virum do, amicum, tutorem, patrem:
Hanc mî in manum dat: mors continuò ipsam occupat.
Accepi, acceptam servabo —————

Whatever wit could add to these simple moving expressions could only weaken them. but here are some others that rise into real transport.

Neque Virgo est usquam, neque ego, qui illam e conspectu amisi in eo.

Ubi quaeram? ubi investigem? quem perconter? quam insistant viam?

Incertus sum: una haec spes est: ubi, ubi est diu celari non potest. TER. Eun. Act. ii. Sc. 3.

Passion speaks here again in the same lively manner:

————— ego ne quid velim?

Cum milite isto praesens, absens ut fies —

Ibid. Act. I. Sc. 2.

Can one wish for more simple or more lively scenes?

It must be owned that Moliere is a great comic poet. I will even venture to say that he has entered farther into some particular characters than Terence; and has handled a greater variety of subjects. with very masterly touches he has drawn and exposed almost every thing that is disorderly, and ridiculous. Terence only describes covetous and suspicious fathers; lavish profligate youths; impudent greedy courtisans; mean, fawning parasites; and cheating wicked slaves. no doubt these characters deserved to be handled agreeably to the manners of the Greeks and Romans. besides, we have but six plays of this great author. but Moliere has opened an unbeaten track. I own again, that he is a fine writer. but may I not speak of his faults with freedom? he oft-times expresses a good thought, very ill. he uses strained and unnatural expressions. Terence with the most elegant simplicity, says in four words, what our poet expresses in a va-

riety of metaphors that are little better than fustian. I like his prose much better than his poetry. for instance, the Miser has fewer faults than his plays that are in verse. it is true the French versification cramped his thoughts. we find likewise that he has succeeded better in the poetry of his *Amphitryon*, where he took the liberty to make irregular verses, than in his other plays. but in general he does not seem to me, even in his prose, to speak with simplicity enough to express all the passions. besides, he has strained some characters. by this freedom he designed to please the pit; to hit the taste of the meanest spectators; and to render the ridicule of such characters the more sensible. but tho' a poet ought to describe the highest degree of every passion, by its most distinguishing marks, the better to shew its deformity and extravagance; yet there is no occasion to constrain nature, and to go beyond all probability. thus, notwithstanding the example of *Plautus*, who says, *Cedo Tertiam*; I assert against *Moliere*, that a miser in his right wits will never desire to look into the third hand of a man he suspects of having robbed him.

Another fault of *Moliere* (which some witty people forgive, tho' I cannot pardon it,) is that he has given vice an agreeable turn; and a shocking ridiculous austerity to virtue. I know his admirers will pretend that he has done justice and honour to true probity; and only exposed morose virtue and a detestable hypocrisy. but without entering into a long dispute on this point, I maintain that *Plato* and the other antient legislators would never have suffered such jesting upon virtuous characters, in their republics.

In fine, I cannot help thinking with *M. Boileau*,

that Moliere who describes the manners of his country with so much beauty and force, falls too low when he imitates the low humour of the Italian comedies.

* In Scapin's Sack I lose the Misanthrope.

§. VIII. It were to be wished, methinks, for the honour of the Academy, that they would procure us a treatise on history. there are but few historians free from gross faults, and yet history is of great † importance. it points out great examples to us: it makes the vices of bad men serve for instruction to the good: it disentangles the origin of nations; and shews by what means people passed from one form of government, to another.

A good historian is not ‡ partial to any age, or nation. tho' he loves his country, he never flatters it. a French historian should shew himself neutral between England, and France. he ought to praise Talbot, as freely as Guesclin; and do as much justice to the Prince of Wales's warlike genius, as to the wisdom of Charles the Vth. he equally avoids panegyric, and satyr: and deserves credit no farther than he confines himself to relate both what is good, and what is bad; without flattery, or malice. he omits no incident that serves to describe the chief persons he speaks of; and to disco-

* Dans ce Sac ridicule, ou Scapin s'enveloppe,
Je ne reconnois plus l'Auteur du Misanthrope.

Boil. Art Poetique. Chant. iii.

† Historia vero testis temporum, lux veritatis, vita memoriae, magistra vitae, nuncia

vetustatis ———
Cic. de Orat. lib. ii. §. 9.

‡ Nam quis nescit, primam esse historiae legem, ne quid falsi dicere audeat? deinde, ne quid veri non audeat? nequa

suspicio gratiae sit in scribendo? nequa simultatis?

Cic. de Orat. lib. ii. §. 15.

ver the true causes of events. but he avoids all those curious disquisitions that tend only to display the author's knowledge. he shews his critical skill only in relating those facts as doubtful, which really are so; and in leaving them to the reader's judgment, after giving him the best information he could. he who has rather a talent for learning, and criticism, than a genius for history, will not bate his reader the least date, or any incident however dry and impertinent; not even the most useless circumstance. he follows his own humour, without regarding the public taste. he would have every body as fond as he is of those trifles that employ his insatiable curiosity. on the contrary, a cautious discreet historian drops all insignificant facts that give the reader no light into any important point. by leaving out these useless incidents, you take nothing from the history: for, they only interrupt and lengthen it; and make it a collection of historical scraps, without any thread of lively narration. such a scrupulous exactness should be left to compilers. the main point is to give the reader an easy view of important things; to shew him their connection; and to lead him on speedily to the unravelling of the whole. herein history ought somewhat to resemble an epic poem:

*Semper ad eventum festinat; et in medias res
Non secus ac notas, auditorem rapit: et quae
Desperat tractata nitescere posse, relinquit.*

HOR. de Ar. Poet. v. 148.

There are many general facts that only inform us of barren dates, and of names which are not worth remembring. I am not acquainted with a man's character, merely by knowing his name. I would rather

read such an historian as Froissard who is not very exact and judicious, and mistakes names, but gives a plain natural account of things; than those historians who tell me that Charlemagne held his parliament at Ingelheim; that then he went to fight the Saxons; and returned to Aix-la-Chapelle. this teaches me nothing that is useful. facts related without circumstances, are like a body stript of its flesh: they make only the skeleton of a history.

The chief perfection of a history consists in the order, and disposal of its parts. to attain to this beautiful order the historian must have one clear and comprehensive view of his whole subject. he should try to place it in various lights, till he find out its truest point of view. he must shew its unity; and draw, as it were from one source, all the chief events that depend upon it. by this method he instructs his readers in the most useful things; and gives them the pleasure of fore-seeing the sequel of events. he engages their attention: he sets before their eyes a scheme of the most important affairs, in every period of time: he points out to them what is most likely to result from it: he makes them argue, without arguing himself: he spares them many repetitions: he never lets them grow weary. the connection he gives to various facts makes the whole narration be easily remembered. I must here again apply to history, a passage of Horace which relates to an epic poem:

Ordinis haec virtus erit, et Venus, aut ego fallor;
 Ut jam nunc dicat, jam nunc debentia dici
 Pleraque differat, et praesens in tempus omittat:

Hor. de Ar. Poet. v. 42.

A dry heavy annalist knows no other order but that of chronology. he repeats a fact every time he has occasion to mention any thing that depends on it. he dares neither set forward, nor postpone, any particular narration. but an historian that has a true genius, out of twenty places, chuses that in which a fact may be most commodiously set, so as to give a light to all the rest. oft-times a fact mentioned long before the order of time it happened in, clears up all the train of events that paved the way to it. Sometimes another incident will appear in its full light, by being postponed: for then it is introduced more appositely, as the occasion of other events. Cicero compares this just order to the care that a person of a good taste takes to † place fine pictures in an advantageous light. thus a judicious reader has the pleasure of continually foreseeing somewhat of the sequel, without confusion; he observes always one event rising out of another; and longs to see the winding up of the whole; which is artfully concealed from him, to hasten him on to it with the greater impatience. when he has perused the whole history, he looks back like a curious traveller, who having got to the top of a mountain, observes all around him, and takes a delight in viewing from this situation, the way he came; and all the pleasant places through which he passed.

A well-chosen circumstance, a saying well related, or a particularity of behaviour that points out a man's genius or humour, is a delicate masterly stroke in history: for it paints the person to the life, and sets him before your eyes. Plutarch and Sueton have done this

† Videtur tamquam tabulas bene pictas collocare in bo- | no lumine.
Cic. de claris orat. §. 75.

to perfection. we observe the same with pleasure in Cardinal D'Ossat. when you read his history, you fancy that you see Clement the VIIIth speaking to him sometimes with openness of heart: and sometimes with great reserve.

An historian ought to retrench many superfluous epithets, and other such ornaments of discourse. this will make his history more concise, more lively, more simple, and more agreeable. in his narration he ought to interweave the most solid notions of virtue, without moralizing. he should avoid sententious remarks with the utmost care. his history will be sufficiently adorned, if he relate things in a just order, and a clear, proper, concise, noble stile. † Cicero says, 'there is 'nothing more agreeable in history than an easy noble 'conciseness.' indeed it is a disadvantage to history to be embellished. nothing could be more worthy of Tully than this remark upon Caesar's commentaries. ‡ 'we have an excellent account of his transactions 'in some commentaries he wrote; which are naked, 'correct, and beautiful; being stript of all the ornaments of stile. but while he seemed only to furnish 'others with materials for writing a history, perhaps 'he gratified some injudicious persons, who might 'endeavour to embellish them: but he discouraged all 'wise men from writing on the same subject.' a wit

† Nihil est in historia, pura et illustri brevitae dulcius.

De claris orat. §. 75.

‡ Commentarios quosdam scripsit rerum suarum, valde quidem probandos. nudi enim sunt, recti, et venusti, omni ornatu orationis tamquam veste

detracta. sed dum voluit alios habere parata unde sumerent, qui vellent scribere historiam, ineptis gratum fortasse fecit, qui volunt illa calamistris inruere; sanos quidem homines a scribendo deterruit.

Ibid.

despises a naked history, as imperfect: he would have it cloathed, trimmed up and adorned with embroidery. the want of these ornaments is what weak people reckon a fault. but a judicious person, who has a delicate taste, despairs of being able to add any real beauty to this noble, majestic simplicity.

The most necessary, and most uncommon accomplishment in an historian is to know exactly the form of government, in every age, and the successive manners of the nation whose history he writes. a painter that knows not what the Italians call, *Il Costume*, can draw nothing exactly. the painters of the school of Lombardy have failed in this particular; tho' in other respects they have represented nature to the life. they have drawn the Jewish high-priest, like a pope; and the antient Greeks, like the people of Lombardy. nothing could be more false, or more shocking than to paint the French in Henry the Second's time, with periwigs and cravats; or to draw those of the present age with beards and ruffs. the manners of each nation are very different from other people's. and the same nation often changes its own customs. during the infancy of Cyrus the Persian manners were as simple, as those of the Medes were effeminate and luxurious. but afterwards the Persians fell into the same softness and variety. an historian would shew himself grossly ignorant if he represented the table of Curius or Fabricius, like that of Apicius, or Lucullus. we should laugh at an historian that should speak of the magnificence of Numa's court, or of the Lacedemonian kings. he ought to describe the powerful and happy poverty of the antient Romans:

 parvoque potentem.

Virg. Aen. L. vi. v. 843.

he ought not to forget how simple and plain the Greeks were in Alexander's time, in comparison of the Asiatics: as appears from * Caridemus' speech to Darius. the very plain house in which Augustus lived forty years, must not be represented like the golden palace that Nero built soon after.

Roma domus fiet: Veios migrate Quirites,
Si non et Veios occupat ista domus.

Our own nation must not be described as if it had been always the same: for it has changed continually. an historian that should draw Clovis amidst a polite, genteel, magnificent court, would be little the better for relating particular facts aright; seeing he would be mistaken in the chief point concerning the manners of the whole nation. the Franks were then only a wild wandring band, almost without laws, and order; who lived only by inroads, and rapine. the Gauls whom the Romans civilized, must not be confounded with the Franks. some rays of dawning politeness should appear in the days of Charlemagne, and immediately vanish again. the sudden fall of his family plunged Europe into a frightful state of ignorance. S. Louis was a prodigy of virtue and prudence in such a degenerate age. we are scarce got out of that tedious night. the revival of literature and arts began in Italy: and they came into France very late. an affectation of wit, and false delicacy hindered their progress.

* Quint. Curt.

The changes that happen in the form of a nation's government ought to be carefully observed by an historian. for instance, in France we had at first Salique lands distinguished from other estates, and allotted to the military part of the nation. he ought never to confound the Beneficiary earldoms of Charlemagne's time, which were only personal offices, with the Hereditary earldoms, which, under his successors, became settlements in families. he should distinguish the parliaments founded by the second royal line, (which were assemblies of the nation) from the several parliaments that the kings of the third line established in the distinct provinces of the kingdom, for determining private law-suits. he ought to know the origin of fiefs; the service of feudataries; the enfranchisement of bondmen; the increase of corporations; the erection of the * Third State; the introduction of clerks practitioners to be counsellors to the nobles, who were little acquainted with the laws; and the establishment of troops in the king's pay, to prevent the incursions of the English, who had settled themselves in the heart of the kingdom. the manners and state of the whole nation have changed in every age. without going further back, the alteration of our manners since Henry the IVth is incredible. it is far more important to observe these changes of a whole nation, than barely to relate particular facts.

If a judicious person set himself to lay down rules for writing history, he might join examples to precepts. he might give his judgment of the historians of all ages; and might observe that a compleat historian is perhaps more uncommon than a great poet.

* Du Tiers-Etat.

Herodotus, who is called the father of history, relates things exactly well. there is a beauty in the very variety of his subjects. but his work is rather a collection of the various accounts of the different countries, than a history that has unity of parts, and a true order.

Xenophon only wrote a journal of his retreat with his ten thousand Grecians from Paphlagonia. every thing in it is distinct, and exact; but uniform. his Cyropaedia is rather a philosophical romance, (as Tully believed,) than a true history.

Polybius is well-skilled in politics, and the art of war: but he reasons too much; tho' he reasons justly. he exceeds the bounds of a mere historian. his work is a kind of political anatomy. he unfolds every event, as contained in its cause: and shews as it were by mechanical laws, that such a people must necessarily overcome another people: and that such a peace made between Rome, and Carthage, could not possibly last.

Thucydides and Titus Livius have many fine harangues: but they seem to have been composed by themselves; and not to be real speeches. one can scarce believe that they copied them from the records of that time. Livy did not understand the military affairs of his age so well as Polybius.

Sallust wrote with a peculiar beauty and nobleness: but he enlarges too much in describing the manners and characters of persons in two very short histories.

Tacitus shews abundance of skill, and a thorow knowledge of the most corrupted hearts. but he too much affects a mysterious conciseness. he is too full of poetical turns in his descriptions. he is too penetrating: he is too refined in his conjectures. he ascribes that to the subtlest policy, which really arose from mis-

take, caprice, or unaccountable humour. the greatest events often flow from the meanest causes. It was weakness, custom, false shame, disgust, or the advice of a freed-man, that determined an affair: whilst Tacitus endeavoured to find out the most refined policy in the emperor's councils. most people are moderate and superficial in the pursuit of evil, as well as of good. Tiberius, one of the vilest men that ever lived, was more influenced by his fears, than by any settled scheme of acting.

We read D'Avila with pleasure; but he speaks as if he had been admitted into the most secret councils. one man could never have been entrusted by all the contending parties. besides, every person must have some secret that he would not communicate to the historian. one can know but a part of the truth: and he who pretends to inform me of what I see he could not know, inclines me to suspect even those facts he might know.

Such a criticism upon antient and modern historians, would be very useful, and very agreeable; without offending any living author.

§. IX. Against what I have proposed, it will probably be objected that the Academy will never adopt these several treatises as its own; without first examining them. now it is not likely that an author who has bestowed the utmost pains on a work, will submit it intirely to the correction of a numerous assembly; in which the opinions of the several members will perhaps be very different. therefore it is not to be supposed that the Academy will adopt such a work.

My answer is short. I suppose that the Academy

will not adopt it; but only employ particular persons in such an undertaking. each of these might consult the Academy at their assemblies. for example, the author of a rhetoric might propose to them his doubts concerning eloquence. the members will give him their thoughts on this subject: and their opinions may happen to be divided. but the author might make what use of them he should judge proper, without constraining himself.

The disputes that should arise in these assemblies upon such questions might be recorded in a sort of journal, that the secretary should compose without partiality. this journal would contain short dissertations that might help to improve criticism, and a good taste. such employment would oblige the gentlemen of the Academy to attend its assemblies punctually. the reputation and advantage of it would spread over all Europe.

§. X. It is true the Academy would frequently happen to be divided upon these questions. the esteem that some have for the antients; and others, for the moderns, might hinder them from agreeing in their judgments. but I apprehend no ill effects from a contest so calm, so polite, and so moderate as that would prove. for in this case, every one might freely follow his own taste, and his own notions. such an emulation might improve learning. may I presume here to offer my thoughts on the subject?

I. I begin with wishing that the moderns might surpass the antients. I would rejoyce to see in our age, and our nation, more vehement orators than Demosthenes, and sublimer poets than Homer. the world,

instead of losing, would certainly gain much by it. the antients would not be less valuable than they have always been; and the moderns would add a new ornament to human nature. the antients must still retain the glory of having begun, and shewn the way to others; and of furnishing them with the means to excel themselves.

2. It would be very foolish to judge of any work by its date.

———et, nisi quae terris semota, suisque
Temporibus defuncta videt, fastidit, et odit.

Si, quia Graecorum sunt antiquissima quaeque
Scripta, vel optima:———

Scire velim chartis pretium quotus arroget annus.

Qui redit ad fastos, et virtutem aestimat annis:
Miraturque nihil, nisi quod Libitina sacravit.

Si veteres ita miratur, laudatque poetas,
Ut nihil anteferat, nihil illis comparet; errat.

Quod si tam Graecis novitas invisâ fuisset
Quam nobis; quid nunc esset vetus? aut quid haberet
Quod legeret, tereretque viritim publicus usus?

Hor. Ep. L. II. Ep. i. v. 21, 28, 35, 48, 64, 90.

If Virgil had not dared to tread in Homer's steps; if Horace had not hoped to come near Pindar; what excellent works must we have lost? Homer and Pindar themselves did not attain to this high perfection at

one step. no doubt they had the advantage of other poets who had smoothed the way for them; and whom they excelled at length. why may not our modern poets have the same hope? how much glory did Horace promise himself?

Dicam infigne recens, adhuc
Indictum ore alio——

Nil parvum, aut humili modo,
Nil mortale loquar——

Carm. lib. III. Od. xxv. v. 7, 17.

Exegi monumentum aere perennius.

Non omnis moriar; multa que pars mei
Vitabit Libitinam: usque ego posterâ
Crescam laude recens: ——

—— fume superbiam
Quæsitam meritis, et mihi Delphicâ
Lauro cinge volens, Melpomene, comam.

Ibid. Od. xxx. v. 1, 6, 14.

Why may we not likewise allow Malherbe to say

Apollon à portes ouvertes ——

Liv. iii. Od. xi. v. 141.

3. I own the emulation of the moderns would be dangerous if it made them despise the antients and neglect to study them. the true way to excel them is to improve by every thing that is valuable in them; and

endeavour (according to their notions) to imitate beautiful nature more closely than they did. I should readily say to those authors of the present age whom I esteem and honour most

———— vos exemplaria Graeca
Nocturnâ versate manu, versate diurnâ.

Hor. de Ar. Poet. v. 268.

if ever you should happen to excel the antients: it is to themselves you must owe the glory of overcoming them.

4. A prudent modest author ought to distrust himself, and the praises he receives from his most valuable friends, self-love will naturally bias him a little; and friendship will incline them to express too great an admiration of his talents. what must he do then, if some friend being charmed with his writings should say to him,

Nescio quid majus nascitur ———?

Proper. Lib. ii. Eleg. ult.

he should not for such a compliment, be less tempted to imitate the modesty of the great and wise Virgil; who, when he was dying, would have burnt his Aeneid, which has been the instruction and delight of all ages. no one that has a clear view of a great and perfect work, as that poet had, can flatter himself so far as to think he has attained to it. nothing comes intirely up to his idea; nor satisfies his delicacy. whoever therefore has a notion of what is truly perfect, perceives at the same time that he has not equalled it. and

he who fancies he has attained to it, has not such a distinct idea of it as he imagines. he must have a scanty genius, and a weak vain mind, who is intirely pleased with himself and his performances. the author who is thus pleased with himself, is generally pleased alone.

Quin sine rivali, teque, et tua solus amares.

Hor. de Ar. Poet. v. 444.

Such an author may have some uncommon talents: but he must be master of more imagination, than judgment, and sound criticism. on the contrary a poet that would equal the antients must shew a judgment superior to the most lively, and fruitful imagination. an author should be proof against all the praises his friends can give him: he should often revise and correct what has been already applauded; and remember this rule,

———— nonumque prematur in annum.

Ibid. v. 388.

5. I am extremely glad to see any author that strives to out-do the antients; tho' he should never be able even to equal them. the public ought to encourage him, and commend his endeavours: they should hope that he may still rise higher in his next attempt; and they should admire whatever he has already done that comes near the antient models.

———— feliciter audet.

I would have all the sons of Parnassus praise him:

———— proxima Phoebi
 Versibus ille facit. ————

Pastores, hederâ crescentem ornatę poetam.

Virg. Ecl. vii. v. 22, 25.

An author is the more to be esteemed for shewing a diffidence of himself, in consulting others about any piece he is still willing to correct.

Imo hæc, quæ Varo necdum perfectâ canebat.

Ecl. ix. v. 26.

I admire an author who applies to himself this beautiful passage;

Nam neque adhuc Varo videor, nec dicere Cinna
 Digna: sed argutos inter strepere anser olores.

Ibid. v. 35.

then I would have all parties unite to praise him:

Utque viro Phoebi chorus assurrexerit omnis.

Ecl. vi. v. 6.

if such an author be still dissatisfied with himself, while the public is highly pleased with him; his taste and genius are far above the very work for which he is admired.

6. I am not afraid to say that the most excellent of the antients have some faults. human nature has never permitted any one to arrive at intire perfection. if I were obliged to judge of the antients according to my own notions only, I should be very cautious in

cenſuring them. they have this great advantage; that while we criticife their works, we walk as it were in the dark; becauſe of our not having a thorow knowledge of their manners, their language, their taſte, and their notions. if we had been their contemporaries, perhaps we ſhould have cenſured them more freely. but I ſpeak of the antients upon the authority of the antients themſelves. Horace that penetrating critic, who was ſo much charmed with Homer, will vouch for me when I venture to affirm that this great poet, in his long work ſometimes nodded a-little.

———— quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus.

Verum opere in longo fas eſt obrepere ſomnum.

De Ar. Poet. v. 359.

Shall we then through a manifeſt prepoſſeſſion aſcribe more to antiquity, than the antients require; and condemn Horace by aſſerting, (againſt the plain-eſt evidence of fact,) that there is the ſame force and beauty in every part of Homer's works?

7. If I may be allowed to offer my thoughts on this point, with all due deference to better judges; I muſt own that there are many defects to be ſeen in the moſt excellent of the antients. for inſtance, I cannot reliſh the Chorus in their tragedies: they interrupt the true action: they have not an exact ſhew of probability; becauſe ſome ſcenes ought not to have a number of acting ſpectators. the diſcourſes of the Chorus are often general and inſipid. I am apt to ſuſpect that theſe interludes were introduced before tragedy was brought to any perfection.

Farther, I find in the antients many ſtrokes of plea-

fantry that are not very delicate. Cicero, the great Cicero himself has several very poor quibbles.

I cannot see Horace's genius in this low piece of satire.

Proscripti regis Rupili pus atque venenum.—

Satyr. L. I. S. vii. v. 1.

we should be apt to gape at reading it, if we did not know its author.

When I read this admirable ode of the same poet,

Qualem ministrum fulminis alitem ———

Car. L. IV. Od. iv. v. 1.

I am always sorry to find these words in it,

————— quibus

Mos unde deductus per omne

Tempus Amazoniâ securi

Dextras obarmet, quaerere distuli;

Nec scire fas est omnia.

v. 18.

take away this passage; and the ode is compleat and perfect. if it be said that Horace designed to imitate Pindar in this sort of parenthesis, which is agreeable to the transport of an ode; I will not dispute that: but I am not so fond of imitation as to relish this flat and superfluous parenthesis. we allow of a noble disorder that flows from transport, and a concealed art: but we cannot approve of an excursion to make a curious

remark on a frivolous subject: it flattens the whole ode.

Again, Cicero's reproaches against Mark Antony seem to me unbecoming the nobleness and excellence of his orations. his famous letter to Lucceius is full of the most gross and ridiculous vanity. we find almost as much in the epistles of Pliny the younger. the antients fall often into an affectation in their stile that is somewhat like what we now call pedantry. perhaps for want of some notions, that we have from religion and natural philosophy, they too much admired several things that we value very little.

8. The wisest antients perhaps hoped (as the moderns do now) that they should surpass the models that they had to copy after. for example; why might not Virgil have hoped, by the * descent of Aeneas into hell, to out-do Homer's review of the ghosts in the country of the Cimmerians? it is very probable that Virgil, notwithstanding his modesty, took pleasure in handling a new topic, (in the ivth book of his Aeneid) that Homer had not touched on.

9. I confess that the antients have a great disadvantage in the grossness both of their religion, and their philosophy. in Homer's time, their religion was only a frightful collection of fables as ridiculous as the tales of fairies. their philosophy was intirely vain and superstitious. before Socrates their morality was extremely defective; tho' their legislators had given excellent rules for government. we must even acknowledge that Plato makes Socrates argue very weakly upon the immortality of the soul. that fine passage of Virgil

* Lib. vi.

Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas,
Geor. ii. v. 490.

in effect places all the happiness of wise men in freeing themselves from the dread of presages, and of hell. this poet promises no other reward in the next life to the purest and most heroic virtue, but the pleasures of sporting on the grass; or fighting on the sand; or dancing, and singing verses; or driving chariots; or having horses and armour. and even these men, and the shows that amused them, were only vain shadows: yet these shadows long'd impatiently to enter again into bodies, that they might begin a-new to suffer all the miseries of this life; which is only a continued sickness that leads us to death. such is the greatest comfort that the antients proposed to mankind:

Pars in gramineis exercent membra palestris:
—— quae lucis miseris tam dira cupido?

Virg. Aen. L. vi. v. 642, 721.

Homer's heroes are not persons of any worth; and the characters of his gods are still inferior to these heroes who fall so much short of the idea we have of worthy men. no-body would wish to have a father so vicious as Jupiter; nor a wife so unsupportable as Juno: and far less, so infamous as Venus. who would chuse such a boisterous friend as Mars; or a servant so thievish as Mercury? these gods seem to have been invented by the enemy of mankind, on purpose to authorize all sort of wickedness, and to ridicule the Deity. this induced Longinus to say † that Homer

§. ix.

made gods of those men that were at the siege of Troy; and that on the contrary he made his gods mere men. he adds in the same chapter, that * ‘ the Jewish law-giver, who was no mean person, having a just notion of the greatness and power of God, expressed it admirably well in the beginning of his laws, by these words; God said, let light be made; and it was made: let the earth be made, and it was made.’

10. It must be acknowledged that there are but few excellent authors among the antients: and that the works of some moderns are very fine. when we do not read the antients with the eagerness of a scholar; nor to inform ourselves of some particular facts; our taste confines us to a small number of Greek and Latin books. there are indeed but few of them excellent; tho’ learning was so long cultivated both by the Greeks and Romans. we cannot therefore wonder that our age, which has just shook off an ignorant unpoliteness, has produced but few French books that one can often peruse with pleasure. I could easily mention several of the antients, whom we are not very fond of; as Aristophanes, Plautus, Seneca the tragedian, Lucan, and Ovid himself. I could likewise name a great many modern authors, whom we relish, and justly admire. but I will name none; lest I should offend

* Ταύτη ἡ ὁ τῶς Ἰσ- δαίων δεσμοδέτης, ἔχ ὁ τυχῶν ἀνὴρ, ἐπὶ δὴ τὴν τῶ θεῶν δύναμιν κατὰ τὴν ἀ- ξίαν ἐγνώρισε καὶ ξέφηνεν, εὐδὺς ἐν τῇ εἰσβολῇ γρά-	ψας τῶς νόμων, ‘ Εἶπεν ὁ ‘ θεός, φησί· τί; ἡμέδω ‘ φῶς, ἡ ἐγένετο· ἡμέδω ‘ γῆ, ἡ ἐγένετο.’
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Longinus. §. ix.

their modesty whom I might mention; and be unjust to others, by not naming them.

On the other hand we ought to consider what may be said in favour of the antients. now, besides their having furnished our modern authors with almost all the best thoughts they have; we ought to set a value even on those parts of the antients' works that are not faultless. Longinus observes that * 'a discourse too much polished and refined is in danger of being mean.' he adds that 'the sublime strain by its loftiness becomes slippery and dangerous'—again, he says † 'tho' I have observed several faults in Homer, and other famous authors; and tho' no body is more displeased with such faults than I am; yet after all, I think—that they are but little escapes which they overlooked: for, having their attention steddily fixed on what is truly great, they could not regard little things——‡ it is true what is faultless cannot be blamed: but that which is noble raises our admiration.' this ju-

* Τὸ γὰρ ἐν παντὶ ἀκριβὲς, κίνδυνος σμικρότητος.—τὰ δὲ μενάλαι ἐπισφαλῇ δι' αὐτὸ γίνεσθαι τὸ μενέδος.

Long. §. xxxiii.

† Παρατεθειμένος δ' ἐκ ὀλίγα καὶ αὐτὸς ἀμαρτήματα, καὶ Ομήρου καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ὅσοι μέγιστοι, καὶ ἥκιστα τοῖς πλάσμασιν ἀρεσκό-

μενος, ὁμῶς δὲ ἔχει ἀμαρτήματα μᾶλλον αὐτὰ ἐκ ὀλίγα καλῶν, ἢ παροράματα δι' ἀμέλειαν, εἰκὴν ὡς ἔτυχεν, ὑπὸ μεγαλοφύας ἀνεπιστάτως παρενηνεγμένα.

Long. §. xxxiii.

‡ καὶ τὸ μὲν ἄπληστον ἐψέγει, τὸ μέγα δὲ καὶ θαυμάζει. Id. §. xxxvi.

dicious critic thought that it was in Homer's old-age that he sometimes nodded a little, in the tedious narrations of the *Odyſſe*: but he adds that ** after all, this old-age is the old-age of an Homer. Indeed ſome careleſs ſtrokes of great painters excell the moſt finiſhed pieces of a common artiſt. an ordinary critic cannot reliſh what is ſublime: it does not affect him. he employs himſelf more agreeably about a miſplaced word, or a careleſs expreſſion. he does not fully perceive the beauty of the general plan, and the order and ſtrength that runs throughout a compleat piece. I ſhould like as well to ſee him buſyed about orthography, comma's, and points of interrogation. I pity the author that falls into ſuch hands:

Barbarus hæſegetes—————

Virg. *Ecl.* i. v. 72.

the critic who cenſures nobly is delighted with what is noble in the work. he deſpiſes what Longinus calls † an exact and ſcrupulous delicacy. Horace is of this taſte

Verum ubi plura nitent in carmine; non ego paucis
Offendar maculis, quas aut incuria fudit,
Aut humana parum cavit natura—————

De Ar. Poet. v. 351.

Befides, the monſtrous groſſneſs of religion among the antients, and their want of true moral philoſophy

** ἀλλὰ γῆρας διηγῶ· | ρα. Longinus. §. ix.
μα, γῆρας δ' ὅμως Ομή- | † §. xxxv.

till the days of Socrates, tend, in one respect, to the honour of the antient writer. for, certainly Homer was obliged to describe his gods just such as religion then represented them to the idolatrous world. he behoved to describe men with those manners that prevailed in Greece, and the lesser Asia. to blame Homer for copying nature faithfully, is to find fault with M. Mignard, M. de Troye, and M. Rigaut for drawing exact pictures. ought Momus to be drawn like Jupiter; Silenus, like Apollo; Alecto, like Venus; or Thersites, like Achilles? must our present court be painted with the ruffs and beards used in former reigns? since Homer therefore was to paint according to truth; ought we not to admire the order, proportion, grace, life, action, and sentiments that he has given to every thing he has drawn. the more monstrous and ridiculous his religion was, he is the more to be admired for having ennobled it with so many magnificent images: the grosser that the manners of his age were, the more surprising it is to see that he has given so much lively force to what is in itself so irregular, absurd, and shocking. what would he not have done, if he had had a Socrates to draw, or an Aristides, a Timoleon, an Agis, a Cleomenes; a Numa, a Camillus, a Brutus, or an Aurelius?

Some are disgusted at the frugality of the manners which Homer describes. but besides that he behoved to represent this antient simplicity as faithfully as he did the grossness of the Pagan religion: I must add, that nothing can be more amiable than this antient simplicity of manners. can they who improve their reason, and love virtue, compare that vain ruinous luxury which is now the corruption of our manners,

and a reproach to the nation, with the happy and elegant simplicity that the antients set before our eyes? When I read Virgil, I would wish I were with that old man he describes:

Namque sub Oebaliae memini me turribus altis,
 Qua niger humectat flaventia culta Galeus,
 Corycium vidisse senem: cui pauca relictæ
 Jugera ruris erant; nec fertilis illa juvencis,
 Nec pecori opportuna seges——
 Regum aequabat opes animis; serâque revertens
 Nocte domum dapibus mensas onerabat inemptis.
 Primus vere rosam, atque autumnino carpere poma;
 Et cum tristis hyems etiam nunc frigore saxa
 Rumperet, et glacie cursus fraenaret aquarum;
 Ille comam mollis jam nunc tondebat Acanthi
 Aestatem increpitans seram, Zephyrosque morantes.

Geor. iv. v. 125, 132.

Has not Homer given beauty enough to Calypso's isle and the gardens of Alcinous, without the help of marble, or gilding? are not the employments of Nausicaa more commendable than the gaming and intrigues of our women now? our fore-fathers would have blushed at them: and yet some dare despise Homer for not having prophetically described those monstrous manners, while as yet the world was so happy as to know nothing of them.

Virgil who had a full view of all the Roman magnificence, has yet given a beauty to king Evander's poverty; and made it an ornament to his poem.

Talibus inter se dictis ad tecta subibant

Pauperis Evandri: passimque armenta videbant
Romanoque foro, et lautis mugire carinis.

Ut ventum ad sedes, haec, inquit, liniina victor
Alcides subiit; haec illum regia cepit.

Aude hospes contemnere opes; et te quoque dignum
Finge Deo; rebusque veni non asper egenis.

Dixit, et angusti subter fastigia tecti

Ingentem Aenean duxit; stratisque locavit

Effultum foliis, et pelle Libyftidinis ursae.

Aen. viii. v. 359.

the shameful corruption of our manners hinders us
from raising our views to admire the sublimity of these
words,

Aude hospes contemnere opes——

Titian who excelled in country pieces paints a verdant valley, with a clear stream running through it, steep mountains, and distant prospects bounded by the horizon. he never paints a fine parterre, with fountains and marble basons. in like manner Virgil does not draw proud senators busied in criminal intrigues: he represents an innocent labourer happy in his country-life.

Deinde satis fluvium inducit, rivosque sequentes,

Et cum exustus ager morientibus aestuat herbis,

Ecce supercilio clivosi tramitis undam

Elicit: illa cadens raucum per laevia murmur

Saxa ciet, scatebrisque arentia temperat arva.

Geor. i. v. 106.

This poet even ventures to compare a free, peaceful, country life with the troublesome delights that

people of great fortunes enjoy; and he imagines nothing more happy than a moderate condition; in which a wise man may be equally secure from envying the prosperity of some; and sympathizing in the miseries of others.

*Illum non populi fasces, non purpura regum
Flexit*—————

—————neque ille
*Aut doluit miserans inopem, aut invidit habenti.
Quos rami fructus, quos ipsa voluntia rura
Sponte tulere suâ, carpfit*—————

Geor. ii. v. 495.

Horace fled from the delights and magnificence of Rome, to enjoy himself in solitude.

*Fastidiosam deferere copiam, et
Molem propinquam nubibus arduis;
Omitte mirari beatae
Fumum, et opes, strepitumque Romae.*

Car. L. iii. v. 9. Od. 29.

—————mihi jam non regia Roma,
Sed vacuum Tibur placet, aut imbellis Tarentum.

Ep. L. II. Ep. vii. v. 44.

When poets would charm the imagination of men they lead them far from great cities, and make them forget the luxury of the age: they carry them back to the golden age: they represent shepherds dancing on the flowry grass, under the shade of some grove, in a delightful season; rather than turbulent courts, and

great men, who are unhappy by their very grandeur.

* Sweet solitude, th' abode of innocence!

Where far from all the objects of vain pomp,
My ease begins, and restless trouble ends;
Valleys, rocks, rivers, pleasing lonely shades;
If ye were witnesses of my disquiet,
Henceforth observe my calm intire content.

Nothing so plainly shews the corrupted manners of a nation as this disdainful luxury that despises the frugal simplicity of the antients. it was this corruption that overthrew Rome. † 'they began (says Salust) to 'intrigue; to carouse; to grow fond of imagery, paintings, carved vessels——wealth began to be reckoned honourable——virtue to languish; and poverty 'to be thought a reproach——houses and country-seats were built like towns——mountains were levelled by private persons——who seemed to me to 'sport away their riches——the earth and seas were 'ransacked for delicacies——' the poor Ithaca of Ulysses pleases me far more than a city shining with such

* Agreables deserts, séjour de l'innocence,
Où loin des vains objets de la magnificence
Commence mon repos, et finit mon tourment,
Vallons, fleuves, rochers, aimable solitude,
Si vous fûtes temoins de mon inquietude,
Soyez-le désormais de mon contentment.

† Insuevit amare, potare, signa, tabulas pictas, vasa coelata mirari——divitiae honoris esse coeperunt——hebescere virtus; paupertas probro haberi——domos atque villas——in urbium modum exae-

dificatas——a privatis compluribus subversos montes——esse; quibus mihi ludibrio videntur fuisse divitiae——vescendi causa terra marique omnia exquirere——

Sal. Bell. Catil.

extravagant magnificence. happy were mankind if they could be satisfied with such pleasures as may be enjoyed without guilt or ruin. it is not the noble simplicity of the antients that ought to be corrected; but our folly and pernicious vanity.

I cannot believe what some learned men have imagined; who tell us that Homer has interwoven in his poems, the most refined politics, the purest morality, and the sublimest notions of theology. I cannot indeed discover these wonders in that poet's works: but I perceive the useful instruction he designed to give the Greeks whom he wished to see always united; and thereby more powerful than the Asiatics. he shewed them that Achilles' resentment against Agamemnon brought greater misfortunes on Greece, than the Trojan arms.

Quicquid delirant reges, plectuntur Achivi.

Seditione, dolis ———

Hor. Ep. L. I. Ep. ii. v. 14.

In vain did the Platonists of the lower empire (who imposed on Julian,) fancy that there are allegories and deep mysteries in the stories of the deities that Homer describes. these mysteries are chimerical. it appears from the holy scripture; from the fathers who confuted the heathen idolatry; and from the plainest evidence of fact, that the religion of the antients was monstrous and extravagant. but Homer did not frame it: he found it established; and could not alter it. he has adorned it: he has concealed much art in his work: he has ranged all the parts of it in such an order as continually raises the reader's curiosity. he has painted

every thing with simplicity, beauty, force, majesty, and passion. what can we desire more?

It is natural for the moderns who excel in elegance, and ingenious turns to fancy that they have surpassed the antients ; whose chief excellence is a natural simplicity. but I must beg leave here to propose a sort of apologue. the inventers of the Gothic kind of architecture (which is said to have come from the Arabians ,) fancied no doubt that they had out-done the Greek architects. a Grecian structure has nothing in it that is merely ornamental. the parts that are necessary to support, or to cover it, as the pillars, and the cornish, become ornaments only by their beautiful proportion. every thing is simple, exact, and useful. we see nothing in it either bold, or fanciful, that can impose on the sight. the proportions are so just, that nothing seems very noble, tho' the whole really be so. every thing is designed to satisfy true reason. on the contrary the Gothic architect, upon very slender pillars, raises up a vast roof into the clouds. one would fancy it were going to tumble, tho' it stands many ages. it is all full of windows, roses, and little knacks. the stones seem to be pincked, and cut-out like paper-baubles. every thing looks gay and light ; as it were hanging in the air. was it not natural now for the first Gothic architects to imagine that by their vain refinements they had out-done the Greek simplicity? now only change the names ; and put poets and orators instead of architects: Lucan must naturally fancy he was a greater poet than Virgil. Seneca the tragedian must imagine he was brighter than Sophocles. Tasso perhaps hoped he should out-strip Virgil and Homer. if these authors thought so, they were much deceived,

and the most excellent modern authors should beware of the like mistake.

While I speak thus freely, I would not be thought to determine this point. I only advise those who adorn the present age not to despise the antient writers who have been so long admired. I do not extol the antients as models without any defect. I would not even discourage any one from hoping to surpass them. on the contrary, I wish I could see the moderns excel by studying those very antients whom they shall overcome. but I should think I exceeded the bounds prescribed me, if I pretended to adjudge the prize to either of the contending parties:

Non nostrum inter vos tantas componere lites:
Et vitula tu dignus, et hic ———

Virg. Ecl. iii. v. 108.

You pressed me, Sir, to declare my thoughts: and I have not so much consulted my ability, as my zeal for the Academy. perhaps I have gone too far; but I designed not to say a word that should make me seem partial. it is time for me to conclude.

Phoebus volentem praelia me loqui,
Victas et urbes, increpuit lyra.
Ne parva Tyrrhenum per aequor
Vela darem ———

Hor. Car. L. iv. Od. xv. v. 1.

I shall always remain with a sincere and high esteem,

S I R, &c.

T H E E N D.

A
DISCOURSE
PRONOUNCED
BY
MR. DE FENELON,
AFTERWARDS
ARCHBISHOP
OF
CAMBRAY,
PRECEPTOR
TO THE
YOUNG PRINCES OF FRANCE,
WHEN HE WAS ADMITTED
A MEMBER
OF THE
FRENCH ACADEMY
INTO THE PLACE OF
MR. PELISSON,
MASTER OF REQUESTS.

GLASGOW:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY ROBERT AND ANDREW FOULIS.
M. DCC. L.

A
DISCOURSE

PRONOUNCED BEFORE THE

FRENCH ACADEMY.

I Ought, Gentlemen, to succeed to Mr. Pelisson's eloquence, as well as to his place, to be able to make a suitable acknowledgment for the honour I receive, and to repair the loss this society sustains in the death of that valuable man.

By translating in his early youth the greatest part of Homer, he made himself master of the art of heightening the least description with spirit and beauty. in a little time he began a work upon the civil-law, which had no other fault, than that it was not finished. from these noble essays he soon proceeded to his masterpiece, the history of the Academy. facility, invention, elegance, insinuation, propriety of thought, and ingenious turn of expression, the distinguishing characteristics of his genius, shine throughout the piece. we may apply to him, what Horace said of the Romans, he dared successfully; his hands made flowers spring up on all sides; whatever he touched, received a new grace. the most common herbs of the field were fitted by him to be the crowns of heroes; and the rule, so necessary for others, of chusing no subject, that is not capable of being embellished, did not seem to regard him. his noble and easy stile resembled the motions of the fabulous deities, who glide through

the air, without touching the earth. his relations discover such exquisite judgment in the choice of circumstances, a variety so entertaining, turns so new and proper even in recounting the most common things, so much industry in connecting the facts, and so much skill in transporting the reader into the very scenes of action, that agreeably deceived by the artificial texture of the narration, he imagines himself actually present, and an eye-witness of every passage.

Every one reads with pleasure and admiration the description of the birth of the Academy, fancies himself in the very house of Mr. Conrart, which, if I may use the expression, was the nursery of it; remarks with infinite delight the simplicity, order, politeness, and elegance, which reigned in those assemblies, and attracted the favour of an eminent minister; then the jealousies and umbrages, which interrupted the calm of those happy beginnings; and afterwards the reputation, which the academy acquired by the writings of her first members. there we see the illustrious Racan, the inheritor of Malherbe's harmony, Vaugelas, renowned for the delicacy of his ear in reforming our language, Corneille, whose great and bold characters shew, that he drew with a masterly hand, Voiture ever accompanied with an easy, smiling train of graces. there we discover merit and virtue in strict alliance with erudition and delicacy, birth and rank with a refined taste of literature. but I am insensibly carried beyond the bounds, which I prescribed myself, and while I am speaking of the dead, I come too near the living, whose modesty might be offended with my encomiums.

Whilst this fortunate revolution in favour of lear-

ning was depending, Mr. Pellisson takes occasion to recommend to posterity the character of the great encourager of it. Cardinal Richlieu at that juncture was changing the whole face of affairs in Europe, and assembling the scattered remains of our civil wars, in order to lay the foundation of a power superior to all others. ever penetrating the closest designs of our enemies, impenetrable in respect to those of his master, he had the address to direct in his cabinet the motions of the most secret springs of foreign courts, and foment and maintain the spirit of division amongst them. steady in his maxims, and inviolable in his promises, he shewed the surprising effects of a wise administration, and of allies placing an entire confidence in their confederates. endued by nature with an exquisite sagacity in knowing men, and the way to employ them according to their respective talents, he engaged them to his person, and afterwards in his designs for the advantage of the public. by these powerful arts, the pride of the imperious house of Austria, which threatened to reduce all Europe under her yoke, received a mortal blow. he put an end to the repeated rebellions of the Huguenots, which of all his successes was the most essential to the internal peace of France. and, to crown all, he introduced peace into a court, where there had been a lasting scene of discord, and this was a work of the most difficulty from his having an aspiring and jealous nobility to contend with, whom he found in possession of an independant state. thus time, which effaces the reputation of others, serves only to advance his; and the farther he is removed from us, he is seen to the greater advantage. but amidst his painful offices he found some moments of agreeable leisure, and

relieved the anxieties of business with the charms of eloquence and poetry. he received into his bosom the Academy, whilst it was in its infancy, and a discerning magistrate, a favourer of learning, was his successor in the protection of it. Lewis adds to it the lustre, which never fails of distinguishing, whatever he honours with his countenance. under the shadow of this great name, you apply yourselves incessantly to reform and purify our language.

Since men of learning and judgment have returned back to the antient standards, the abuse of wit and language is reformed; and a way of writing more natural, more nervous, and more concise, is introduced. no farther care is employed upon words, than as they are of absolute necessity to express our thoughts in their full force and extent; and no other thoughts are allowed of, but such as are just, solid, conclusive, and arising from the subject. the use of learning, which was formerly affected with so much vain parade, is now rejected, except in cases, where it is indispensable; even wit itself receives a check, because the perfection of art consists in imitating the simplicity of nature so exactly, that it may be mistaken for her. from hence a luxurious fancy no longer passes for wit; but that title is adjudged to belong only to a regular and correct genius, which converts every thing to sentiment, which closely follows the modesty and plainness of nature, which brings all her thoughts to the scale of reason, and esteems nothing beautiful, that is not conformable to truth. the present age is convinced, that the florid stile, however agreeable and engaging it may appear, is not the true sublime, which rejecting

all ostentatious ornaments of pomp and magnificence, is found only in the natural.

Men are at last convinced, that they ought to write, as the Raphaels, the Carraches, and the Poussins painted, that they should neither labour to invent unnatural extravagancies, nor trifle with the pencil to shew the vivacity of their imagination, but employ their utmost care to copy after nature. it is now acknowledged, that the beauties of discourse resemble those of architecture. the boldest pieces, and those, which come nearest to the Gothic order, are not esteemed the best. meer ornaments, which are of no use to the edifice, ought not to take place, but all the parts necessary to the support of it, should be skilfully turned into ornaments, provided a strict regard be had to observe the just proportions.

Thus in a discourse we retrench all useless embellishments, which neither serve to illustrate what is obscure, nor to represent in the most lively colours what should be most exposed to view, nor to prove a truth by a variety of engaging turns, nor to excite the passions, which are the only springs capable of moving and perswading the audience; for passion is the soul of discourse. this, Gentlemen, hath been the progress of letters for sixty years past; which Mr. Pellisson would have described, if he might have continued his history of the Academy.

A minister, ever ready to employ persons of the most eminent abilities, brought him out of the course of his studies into public business. then how great was his probity, and his integrity, how constant his gratitude towards his benefactor? in that post of trust, to which he was advanced, his whole endeavours turned

upon doing good, upon discovering, and employing merit. to shew his virtues in their best lights, he wanted nothing but to be unfortunate. he became so, Gentlemen. his innocence and his courage appeared clearly in the prison. the Bastile proved an agreeable solitude to him, where he applyed himself to the improvement of learning.

Happy captivity, desirable chains, which were the means of reducing at last to the yoke of faith a mind, which before knew no restraint! during this leisure he went up to the sources of tradition to fetch arguments, wherewith he might oppose truth; but truth prevailed, and appeared to him in all her charms. he came out of prison, honoured with the king's esteem and favour; but what is still greater, he came out, determined to be an humble proselyte to the Church. the sincerity and disinterestedness of his conversion occasioned his delaying to perform the ceremony of it, from the apprehension that his talents might draw on him the recompense of an employment, which a person of less virtue than himself would have solicited.

From that moment he never discontinued speaking, writing, and employing all the favours his credit with his prince had procured him, towards recalling his wandring brethren. happy fruit of the most fatal error! we must have felt within ourselves the anxious pains, which are to be undergone in this difficult passage from darkness to light, to be animated with that vivacity, and endued with that patience, tenderness, and delicacy of charity, which shine in his controversies.

Notwithstanding the weak condition, to which he was reduced, we saw him at the foot of the altar, and

at the point of death, celebrating his feast, to use his own expression, and the anniversary of his conversion. alas! we heard him, excited by his zeal and his courage, promise with a dying voice, that he would finish his great work upon the sacrament. yes, I saw him with tears in his eyes, I heard him, he said all that a Christian, nourished for so many years with the word of God, can say, to prepare himself to receive the holy sacrament. it is true, death, putting on the image of sleep, surprised him; but she found him well prepared.

In fine, Gentlemen, the affairs of justice and religion, which the king had committed to his care, did not divert him from applying himself to the polite sciences, to which he was destined by nature. his pen was immediately pitched upon to write the history of the present reign. with what joy shall we behold, Gentlemen, in this history, a prince, who in his early youth, finishes by his steadiness, what Henry the Great his grandfather scarce dared to attempt? Lewis extinguishes the rage of duelling, whereby the most noble blood of France had been spilt. he raises his sinking authority, regulates his revenues, and introduces discipline among his troops. whilst with one hand he levels with the ground the walls of so many strong places, in the sight of his astonished enemies, with the other he makes the polite arts and sciences flourish by his munificence, in the peaceful bosom of France.

But what do I see, Gentlemen? a new confederacy, formed of the most considerable potentates of Europe, threatening to besiege this vast kingdom, as if it were a single fortress. Lewis alone, during the space of five years, makes important conquests, and gains signal victories over the united forces of this league, which

had the presumption to boast, that they would oppress him with ease, and make his provinces become the scene of desolation.

But who dares attempt to describe Lewis in this last campaign, more glorious by his patience, than his conquest? he is determined to besiege the most impregnable place of the low countries, encompassed by two rivers, guarded by a citadel raised on an inaccessible rock, consisting of several fortresses, tho' but one place, having one army within for garrison, and another without, composed of an incredible number of English, Dutch, Spanish and German forces, commanded by a chief, accustomed to risque all hazards and dangers in battle, and at a time, when nature herself altered her course, and caused an inundation in the summer season. in the mean while he receives intelligence, that his fleet, however invincible in courage, oppressed by the unequal numbers of his enemies, is burnt, and he supports this stroke of ill fortune with as much temper, as if he had been exercised in adversity. he is calm and serene under difficulties, full of expedients under disappointments, and so humane in respect to the besieged, that he even prolongs the siege, however dangerous, to spare the city, which resists him, and which it is in his power to reduce to ashes. he never places his confidence in the multitude of his experienced soldiers, in the noble ardour of his captains, in his personal valour, which animates his whole army, or in the many victories, which he has gained, but in the inaccessible azylum of the Lord of Hosts. he returns at length victorious, with his eyes directed towards the throne of the Almighty, who disposes of victory according to his divine will; and what is

still more glorious than all his successes, he forbids our praises.

Possessed of a grandeur so humble and modest, which is not more above all encomiums, than it is above all events, may he, Gentlemen, rely only upon his virtue, shew an inviolable regard to truth and justice, be known to his enemies, (this wish comprehends the prosperity of Europe) become the umpire of all nations, after having removed their jealousies. may he extend his goodness to his people in the blessings of a profound peace, be long the delight of mankind, and reign over them in such a manner, as if he had no other view, than the glory of God, who reigned over him.

This, Gentlemen, is, what Mr. Pellisson would have immortalized in his history. the Academy has produced more persons capable of transmitting it to late posterity; but so vast a subject invites you all to write. enter, therefore, Gentlemen, upon this glorious work of celebrating so distinguished a reign, I cannot give a greater testimony of my unfeigned zeal for the honour of this Society, than by forming a wish so worthy of it.

THE END.

D I A L O G U E S
OF THE
D E A D
BY T E
A R C H B I S H O P
O F
C A M B R A Y;

CONTAINING
HIS DIALOGUES BETWEEN
DEMOSTHENES AND CICERO,
HORACE AND VIRGIL.

DEMOSTHENES AND CICERO.

A parallel between these two orators, wherein is given the character of true eloquence.

CICERO.

WHAT! dost thou pretend that I was but an ordinary orator?

DEMOSTHENES.

Not an ordinary one ; for it is not over an ordinary person that I affect superiority. thou wert doubtless a celebrated orator. thou hadst great parts ; but didst frequently deviate from the point wherein perfection consists.

CICERO.

And pray hadst thou no faults at all?

DEMOSTHENES.

I believe I can be taxed with none in point of eloquence.

CICERO.

Canst thou compare richness of genius with me? thou who art dry, unadorn'd, who art ever confined within narrow and contracted limits; thou dost not amplify any subject; thou from whom nothing can be retrenched, so jejune, so starved, if I may use the term, is the manner in which thou treat'st thy subjects: whereas I give mine a length, which displays a copiousness and fertility of genius, which gave men of judgment occasion to say, that nothing could be added to my works.

DEMOSTHENES.

He from whom nothing can be retrenched, hath said nothing but what is perfect.

CICERO.

He to whom nothing can be added, hath omitted nothing that could embellish his work.

DEMOSTHENES.

Thou findest thy discourses more replete with flashes of wit than mine? speak honestly, is not that the reason thou exaltest thyself above me?

CICERO.

I will even own it to thee then, since thou talk'st so. my pieces are infinitely more ornate than thine. they speak far more wit, more ingenuity of turn, more art, more ease. I exhibit the same thing under twenty different shapes. when people heard my orations, they could not forbear admiring my parts, and being

continually surpris'd at my art; they were ever shouting and interrupting me, in order to applaud and extol me. thou must have been heard very quietly, and thy audience, I fancy, gave thee no interruption.

DEMOSTHENES.

What thou sayest of us both is true. thou mistakest only in the conclusion thou drawest from it. thou didst take up the assembly with thyself: I took it up only with the affairs I spoke upon. people admired thee; I was forgot by my audience, who saw nothing but the course I wanted them to take. thou didst entertain with the flashes of thy wit. I struck down with bolts of thunder. thou madest men say: how finely he speaks! I made them say: come on, let us march against Philip. they praised thee: they were too much carried out of themselves to praise me, when thou didst harangue, thou appearedst ornate; none discovered in me any ornament: there was nothing in my pieces but precise, strong, clear arguments; and then impulses like lightning which nothing could resist. thou wert a perfect orator, when thou wert, like me, simple, grave, austere, without apparent art; in a word, when thou wert Demosthenical: but when wit, turn, and art shone forth in thy discourses; then wert thou mere Cicero, departing so far from perfection, as thou departedst from my character.

DIALOGUE II.

DEMOSTHENES AND CICERO.

The difference between the Orator and the true Philosopher.

CICERO.

TO have lived in the time of Plato, and even to have been his disciple, methinks you profited very little by such an advantage.

DEMOSTHENES.

Have you then observed nothing in my orations, you who read them to so good purpose, that savoured of Plato's maxims, and his manner of perswading?

CICERO.

That is not what I mean: you were the greatest orator of the Greeks; but then you were nothing but an orator. as for me, though I never knew Plato but in his writings, and lived about three hundred years after him, I strove to imitate him in philosophy; I made him known to the Romans, and was the first who introduced that kind of writing among them; in so much that I united as far as I was capable, in one and the same person, eloquence and philosophy.

DEMOSTHENES.

And so you think you were a great philosopher?

CICERO.

To be so, it is sufficient to love wisdom, and to labour to acquire knowledge and virtue: I think I may give myself the title without excess of vanity.

DEMOSTHENES.

For an orator, I grant, you were the first of your nation; and even the Greeks of your time admired

you: but for a philosopher, I cannot grant it. one is not that at so easy a rate.

CICERO.

You don't know what it cost me: my lucubrations, my labours, my meditations; the books I read, the masters I heard, the treatises I composed.

DEMOSTHENES.

All that is not philosophy.

CICERO.

What more, pray, is requisite?

DEMOSTHENES.

To do what you said of Cato by way of derision, to study philosophy, not in order to discover the truths it teaches, to argue about it as most men do; but in order to reduce it to practice.

CICERO.

And did not I do so? did not I live up to the doctrine of Plato and Aristotle, which I had embraced?

DEMOSTHENES.

Drop we Aristotle: I might perhaps dispute him the quality of a philosopher, nor can I have any great opinion of a Greek, who was attached to a king, and that to Philip: as for Plato, I maintain that you never followed his maxims.

CICERO.

'Tis true that in my youth, and during the greatest part of my time, I followed the active and laborious life of those whom Plato calls Politicians. but when I saw my country had changed its aspect, and that I could no longer be of use to her in high employments, I sought to serve her by the sciences, and retired to my country-seats, in order to apply myself to contemplation, and the study of truth.

DEMOSTHENES.

That is to say, philosophy was your last resort, when you had no longer any share in the administration, and that then you had a mind to distinguish yourself by your studies: for it was glory more than virtue that you pursued in them.

CICERO.

'Tis needless to lie, I ever loved glory, as an attendant of virtue.

DEMOSTHENES.

Say rather, you loved glory much, and virtue little.

CICERO.

Upon what grounds do you judge so hardly of me?

DEMOSTHENES.

Upon your own discourses: at the very time you played the philosopher, did you not pronounce those fine orations, wherein you flattered Caesar your tyrant, more servilely, than ever was Philip by his slaves? yet we know how you loved him; it well appeared after his death, and in his life-time you did not spare him in your letters to Atticus.

CICERO.

It was expedient to conform one's self to the times, and to endeavour to sooth the tyrant, lest he should grow still worse.

DEMOSTHENES.

You talk like a good orator, though like a bad philosopher: but what became of your philosophy after his death? who obliged you to enter again into public affairs?

CICERO.

The Roman people, who looked upon me as their sole support.

DEMOSTHENES.

Your vanity prompted you to think so, and delivered you up to a young man, who made a tool of you. but let us return to the point: you were always an orator, never a philosopher.

CICERO.

And were you ever any thing else?

DEMOSTHENES.

No, I confess; but then I never made any other profession, I deceived no body: I came early to understand that I must choose between rhetoric and philosophy; that each required a whole man. the desire of glory touched me: I thought it a fine thing for me who was but a private citizen, and a common tradesman's son, to govern the people by my eloquence, and make a stand against the power of Philip. I loved the public-weal, and the liberty of Greece; but I may now confess I loved myself still better, and was very sensible of the pleasure of receiving a crown in full theatre, and of leaving my statue in the public Place, with a pompous inscription upon it. now I see things in another light, and perceive that Socrates was in the right, when he assured Gorgias, 'that eloquence was no such fine thing as he imagined; were it even to attain its end, and render a man absolute master in his commonwealth.' this both you and I attained: confess now, we were nothing the happier.

CICERO.

'Tis true our lives were two continued scenes of toils and dangers. I had no sooner defended Roscius, than I was fain to fly into Greece, to avoid the indignation of Sylla. the accusation of Verres drew a world of enemies upon me; my consulship, the time of my

greatest glory, was also the time of my greatest toils, and of my greatest dangers. I was frequently in hazard of my life, and the odium I then incurred broke out afterwards by my exile. in fine, it was nothing but my eloquence that occasioned my death, and had I not pushed Antony so hard, I had been still in life. I say nothing of your misfortunes; it were needless to recal them to your mind. but neither of us have any thing to blame but fate, or fortune, if you will, which made it our lot to be born in so corrupt times, that it was impossible to reform our commonwealths, or even to prevent their ruin.

DEMOSTHENES.

It was therein we wanted judgment, undertaking impossibilities: for it was not our people that forced us to take care of the public affairs, and we were not at all engaged in them by our birth. I forgive a prince born in the purple for governing, as he can, a state, which the gods have committed to his charge, by causing him to be born of a certain race, seeing he is not at freedom to abandon that trust, how bad soever he find his situation: but a mere private person ought to think of nothing but regulating himself and governing his own family; he ought never to desire public offices, far less to court them: if they be forced upon him, he may accept them out of love to his country; but when once he has not the liberty of doing good, and his citizens grow regardless both of the laws and of reason, he ought to return into private life, and content himself with deploring the public calamities which he finds himself unable to avert.

CICERO.

By your way of reckoning, my friend Pomponius

Atticus was wiser than I, and even than Cato himself, whom we so highly extolled.

DEMOSTHENES.

Yes doubtless, Atticus was a true philosopher: Cato was unseasonably obstinate in pretending to reform a people who would live no longer in liberty, and you yielded too easily to Cæsars fortune; at least, you did not enough preserve your dignity.

CICERO.

But after all, is not eloquence a good thing, nay a great gift of the Gods?

DEMOSTHENES.

It is very good in itself: 'tis only the use of it that may be bad, as when it is employed towards tickling the passions of the people, or the gratifying of our own. and what else did we in our virulent declamations against our enemies? I against Midias or Eschines, you against Piso, Vatinius or Antony? how egregiously did our passions and interests make us offend against truth and justice! the true use of eloquence is to set truth in its proper light, and to persuade others to their true interest, that is, to justice, and the other virtues. it was the use that Plato made of it, that neither of us imitated.

D I A L O G U E

BETWEEN VIRGIL AND HORACE.

The characters of those two Poets.

VIRGIL.

W^Hat peaceful happiness do we enjoy on these still flowery lawns, fast by the side of this cool, limpid, softly gliding stream, and by the fragrant wood so near refreshed!

HORACE.

If you don't take care, you'll make an eclogue: a work to shades denied. see Homer, Hesiod, and Theocritus; with laurel crowned they hear their verses sung, but make no more.

VIRGIL.

I learn with joy that your's hold the delight, after so many ages, of the learned. you cheated not yourself, when, in your odes, you said assured, "I shall not wholly die."

HORACE.

My works, 'tis true, have stood the shock of time: but one must lose you as much as I do, not to be jealous of your glory. for you in rank are next to Homer placed.

VIRGIL.

Our muses ought by no means to be jealous of each other. their kinds are different. what in you is admirable is variety: your odes are tender and beautiful, often vehement, rapid, sublime. your satyrs are simple, natural, concise, and poignant. one

there finds a profound knowledge of man, a most serious philosophy with a pleasant turn, which reforms mens manners, and instructs while it entertains them. your Art of Poetry shews, that you had the whole compass of acquired parts, and all the strength of genius necessary to execute the greatest works, whether epic poem or tragedy.

HORACE.

'Tis a good jest to hear you talk of variety, you who have given your Eclogues the native tenderness of Theocritus: your Georgics are full of the most smiling pictures: you embellish and humour all nature: and then for your Eneid, the beautiful order, the magnificence, the strength, and sublimity of Homer shine throughout the whole.

VIRGIL.

But I did no more than follow him step by step.

HORACE.

You did by no means follow Homer, when you treated the loves of Dido. that fourth book is quite an original. so likewise none can rob you of the praise of having made Eneas's descent into hell more beautiful than the evocation of spirits in the Odyssey.

VIRGIL.

My last books were neglected. I did not intend to have left them so imperfect. you know I wanted to burn them.

HORACE.

What pity it had been! that was an excess of delicacy. any one may see, that the author of the Georgics could have finished the Eneid with the same care. I do not so much mind that extreme exactness, as

the elevation of genius, the oeconomy of the whole work, the strength and boldness of the painting. to deal ingenuously, if any thing hinders you from equaling Homer, it is your being more polished, more correct, more finished; but less simple, less strong, less sublime. for with a single touch he sets nature unveiled before our eyes.

V I R G I L.

I own I did some violence to simple nature, in order to adapt myself to the taste of a magnificent people, delicate in every thing relating to politeness. Homer seems to forget the reader and to mind nothing but the painting of real nature in every circumstance. in this I yield to him.

H O R A C E.

You are still that modest Virgil, who was so backward to push himself at the court of Augustus. now I have told you freely what I thought of your works, tell me in the same manner the faults of mine. sure you do not think me incapable of acknowledging them.

V I R G I L.

There are, methinks, some passages of your odes which might have been retrenched without taking ought from the subject, and which make no part of the design. I am not ignorant of the transport essential to the ode. but there are some things a little foreign, into which a beautiful transport never strays. there are also some passionate, marvelous passages, where you will perhaps observe somewhat wanting, either in point of harmony, or the simplicity of the passion. never did man give a happier turn to speech, to make it express a fine sentiment with conciseness and delicacy.

the words become new by the use you make of them. but all is not equally flowing; there are some things I should think turned with rather too much art.

HORACE.

As for harmony, I do not wonder that you are so difficult. for nothing is so smooth and harmonious as your numbers. their cadence alone is so moving, that it draws tears from the eyes.

VIRGIL.

The ode requires a quite different harmony, which you have almost always hit on, and which is more varied than mine.

HORACE.

After all, I produced nothing but petty performances. I blamed what is wrong, and pointed out the rules of the right, but I executed no great work like your heroic poem.

VIRGIL.

Indeed my Horace, we have dwelt too long for honest men, upon each other's praise. I grow ashamed of it. let us cease the theme.

THE END.



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